

STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE

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Editor's Message



Industry Leadership by Kendall Hoyd

Your involvement in the industry matters!

Okay, here is a subject that is guaranteed to send you onward in the publication to look for some information that is interesting or beneficial. It is my chance to write virtually anything, or even nothing, because seeing the subject line is going to cause you to skip the column anyway. It is obviously going to be another request for your time and attention for the "greater good."

HOWEVER, I am going to try to hold your interest by spending some time, while appealing to you to get involved in your industry association's management, telling you about how INTERESTING AND BENEFICIAL getting involved will be—not just for your industry association, but for you!

Here is what is so good about getting involved with your WTCA Board of Directors:

1. You get access to a high-quality crystal ball.
2. The MCA degree (Masters of Component Administration).
3. Free consulting from industry experts.
4. Hotel conference room cold-cut sandwiches.

THE CRYSTAL BALL

One of the things that is most remarkable about our industry is the fact that our market is so fragmented and regionalized by legal environment, industry practices, customer types, geography and about 50 other differences that you can find moving from one market to another. It is fascinating to find out how many different ways there are to "skin a cat," so to speak. What is also interesting is that you will find that your colleagues in other, vastly different markets are dealing with issues that will be coming to your hometown sometime soon. The first time any of us deal with a new Department of Transportation regulation, or a new requirement relating to truss placement diagrams, we spend a lot of time and effort seeking the right resolution. When you have already heard from a colleague in North Carolina that just went through that process, you are likely to spend a lot less of your valuable time seeking that same resolution. There is a lot to be said for hearing about it one or two years in advance and already knowing what others have learned the hard way.

THE MCA

In addition to the fortune-telling benefit, there is an excellent educational opportunity. This one has tremendous potential as a management development tool, and since it is so pertinent to component plant issues, I'll call it the Master of Component Administration, or MCA if you're into acronyms. If you have management staff that you would like to see become more seasoned, capable and effective, I highly recommend spending the travel money and the few days of time that it would require each year to get them involved with the WTCA Board of Directors and committees. They will be exposed to policy-level issues and decision-making that is laser-focused on subject matter that relates directly to leading and managing a component manufacturing operation. The Component Manufacturers Roundtable that kicks off each board meeting is some of the most valuable time you or your managers will ever spend when it comes to setting strategy for your business. You can't get a better return on your management development dollar than you will by getting up-and-coming managers involved with WTCA Board and Committee work.

FREE CONSULTING

Here is another amazing characteristic of our industry. Some of the brightest, most creative and entrepreneurial people in the country are willing to share ideas, practices and philosophies with their colleagues from other markets. One negative characteristic about the localization of our markets, and in some cases of our companies, is that we can get pretty insular in our view of the world and what's going on in it, because we see the same small group of people every day and are exposed to the same basic thought processes all the time. What consultants sell (usually for hundreds of dollars per hour) is a different way of thinking about problems that managers sometimes struggle with because they can't get away from a particular perspective or point of view. Again, for a very low cost, you get access to people with dozens of different ways of thinking about many of the exact same problems you already face every day. I have rarely come away from a quarterly board meeting without having encountered some concept or suggestion that has ultimately made a difference in my work at home.

SANDWICHES

Okay, I admit, selling you on the sandwiches is probably a waste of time. If you don't already know how great hotel conference room sandwiches are, I don't have time to tell you. As additional incentive to find out, however, the cookies are always great, too—just ask our esteemed attorney for his wise counsel on the subject of cookies. No one has greater expertise.

In any event, I hope I have been able to get you to notice some of the benefits of being involved with the WTCA board and committees. I guess you have to ask yourself, is the cost of involvement worth the value of even one idea that would have an immediate positive affect on your employees and your profits?

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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 of structural building components to ensure growth and continuity, and to be the information conduit by staying abreast of leading-edge issues. SBC will take a leadership role on behalf of the component industry in disseminating technical and marketplace information, and will maintain advisory committees consisting of the most knowledgeable professionals in the industry. The opinions expressed in SBC are those of the authors and those quoted solely, and are not necessarily the opinions of any of the affiliated associations (SBCC, WTCA, SCDA & STCA).