



Truss Technology Workshops Restructured to Increase Usage

by WTCA Staff

Revamped to educate a broader audience.

WTCA's Truss Technology Workshop has undergone a major restructuring to help bring important industry information to construction industry professionals, and to help WTCA members educate their markets. Earlier this year, a subcommittee of Ken Cloyd and Ben Hershey was formed to look at TTWs and improve their use by members, and to better target TTWs for key audiences such as architects and engineers, building officials and contractors. The subcommittee's recommendations for TTW restructuring were approved by the Board at the August Open Quarterly Meeting.

"One of the problems that our industry is faced with is educating outside of our employees," said Ben Hershey, President of Alliance TruTrus, LLC. "We've done a great job educating our employees with TTT, TMO, ORisk and other programs. We need to do more by educating the people outside of the plant: architects, engineers, building officials, framers and contractors."

The subcommittee looked at how TTWs can help component manufacturers fill this education gap. "There's a lot of stuff we do that is very pertinent to improving our industry as a whole," said Ken Cloyd, President/CEO of California Truss Company. "The more education we give architects, engineers and other professionals, the better place our product will be—fewer failures, better drawings, more specific details," he said.

Hershey agrees that there is a definite need to share information about component construction to the larger construction industry. "So many young people are coming out of college and tech schools and we're finding they've been taught about concrete and steel, but little on wood. They want to know how to use, design and install our products," he said. "Likewise, so many framers aren't educated and are starved to know this information. We can help show them how they can mitigate their risk."

Here are some of the major changes to expect as part of the restructuring.

Professionals—View TTWs for Free!

To encourage the use of TTWs among industry professionals, starting this month, online TTWs are now available at no cost to the following audiences:

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

ttw.sbcindustry.com

Continued on page 40

4 TTW Options—Choose What's Right for You

With four options, WTCA's Truss Technology Workshop presentations give WTCA members the tools to educate their market and help brand their business. Members can mix and match TTW's four formats to develop their own education plan. These formats allow WTCA members and construction industry professionals to strike the perfect balance between communicating critical information about the structural building components industry while professionals fulfill their need for industry and continuing education. Take a look at TTW's formats below and choose the combination that's right for you.

1 Live Seminars

Live TTWs are presented in a classroom setting with a TTW projected by a live instructor. Participants enjoy face time with the instructor and receive handout packages on the given topic. Presentations can be easily customized to suit the needs of the audience, and participants can ask questions and learn from other attendees. This live format is well suited for local groups that would like a presentation at a designated time and place.

2 Online TTWs

Designed for individuals who want a course brought directly to them, online TTWs are auto-run, produced courses accessed through TTW's website, ttw.sbcindustry.com. With nearly 20 courses available on the site 24/7, participants have the flexibility to choose when and where they take a course. Quizzes are embedded throughout each course to document completion for CEU credit, and students can email WTCA's technical team to ask questions.

3 Web-Based TTWs

Web-based TTWs bring together some of the best features of live and online TTWs – one-on-one interaction with an instructor and other participants along with the convenience of not having to travel to a meeting. Participants are connected through the Internet and a teleconference line to an instructor. Handout packages can be mailed in advance or posted online for viewing, and presentations can be easily customized to suit the needs of the audience.

4 Component Plant Tours

Truss plant tours are a walking tour of a manufacturing facility where participants gain a first-hand understanding of the inner operations of a component plant. This is probably the most powerful learning opportunity our industry can provide in communities across the country. Seeing that this is a high-tech industry with a commitment to quality allows participants to gain a much greater appreciation for all that goes into building components. Component plant tours are appropriate for all groups and can be coordinated to fit everyone's schedule.

Have you used TTWs to educate your marketplace in any way? Tell us about your experience; email Emily Patterson at WTCA at epatterson@qualtim.com.

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Truss Technology Workshop

Educating Professionals on the Future of Framing

Welcome to WTCA's Truss Technology Workshop — your source for education on the structural building components industry. Fulfill your professional licensing requirements anytime, anywhere with TTW's comprehensive online multi-media courses on metal plate connected wood trusses and wood framed construction. Or stay current on industry issues with TTW's extensive online resource library. Choose the category below that best describes your job or interests to find out more about courses designed to meet your training needs.

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Request a Live TTW in Your Area

Request a Certificate from a Live TTW

TTWs Restructured to Increase Usage

Continued from page 36

Professionals can visit ttw.sbcindustry.com and access individual online courses at no charge. However, each course includes a quiz with the option to purchase certification for continuing education credit (CEUs/PDHs). Each quiz and certificate costs \$25.

"We've never really marketed to engineers and architects in this manner," said Cloyd. Offering free TTWs to these audiences, he said, stands to benefit the industry for years to come. Beyond the initial education a professional receives, Cloyd says TTWs can help market the industry and individual manufacturers. "If a building department can go to our site and learn something for free, it will elevate our product in their eyes."

The more education we give architects, engineers and other professionals, the better place our product will be—fewer failures, better drawings, more specific details.

For professionals who wish to earn continuing education credit for multiple courses and are interested in bundling additional features with TTWs, a year-long subscription can be purchased for the site (visit www.ttw.sbcindustry.com/pricing.php for exact pricing). This seat-based subscription includes access to quizzes and certification for all courses and allows users to print their own certificates.

Enhanced Members-Only Package

Another change in the TTW restructuring allows component manufacturers and suppliers to stay up to date on industry issues. The new enhanced members-only TTW package includes access to courses, quizzes and certification. Members can earn TTT recertification credit and professional continuing education with this option.

In addition, this new package option includes access to PowerPoint® files for members who want to give live presentations in their market. "All you have to do is push a button and point. It's an easy way to get information out to any audience," said Clyde Bartlett, President of Bluegrass Truss Company. He's used TTW PowerPoint presentations on "How to Read a Truss Design Drawing" and "How to Read a Truss Placement Plan" in presentations to code administrators and structural engineering associations in his state. "They told one of my employees how knowledgeable I am," he said. "TTWs are easy to use and make you look professional."

Individuals who would like to use TTW PowerPoints without access to the online courses can purchase access to just the TTW PowerPoint files. Chapters can receive complimentary access to download individual PowerPoints from the website for use at a chapter event; contact WTCA for more information and to obtain access for your chapter.

For those who want to be able to take course content with them on the go, individual TTWs can also be purchased on CD (visit www.ttw.sbcindustry.com/pricing.php for pricing). In addition to a requested TTW, chapters and members can receive collateral material on a CD, such as additional customized versions of a presentation (where available). The non-member version of CDs includes only the produced version of a requested TTW.

Live Web-Based TTWs

Along with the above price restructuring, WTCA is also unveiling live web-based TTWs. Presented in real time, web-based TTWs connect participants through the Internet and a teleconference line to an instructor who gives a presentation. Participants receive one-on-one interaction with the instructor and other attendees without spending the extra time or expense of traveling to a meeting.

Alliance TruTrus has offered similar web-based presentations based on TTW content. "On a Friday afternoon, we offered a web-based presentation where they had the ability to log on and see what we're doing. Now we have continuing education credits available for that from WTCA. It's a way to educate a lot of people at once without going to their office," he said.

Hershey notes that the web-based format helps break down barriers that customers and potential customers might have when attending a traditional meeting. "Now we're finding with building officials, they're saying, 'If I have to travel 50 miles, I'm not going to do that.' The gas cost alone can be prohibitive. Here's a way of eliminating that as a reason for not coming."

Members can sponsor web-based TTWs to offer to their current and potential customers. Contact WTCA staff for more information or to offer a live web-based TTW through your company or chapter.

Reap the Benefits of TTWs Today & Tomorrow

TTW restructuring brings many changes to the program, with the goal of offering members and professionals the opportunity to use these presentations in the format that best meets their education goals. In addition to filling an immediate educa-

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tion and training need, the TTW subcommittee looked at the long-term benefits TTWs can bring over time in promoting the industry. "I see this restructuring as growing our markets," said Cloyd. "If we get this out, we'll increase our market share."

To view courses or purchase access to TTW materials, visit ttw.sbcindustry.com. For more information about offering TTWs in your market, contact Melanie Birkeland at mbirkeland@qualtim.com. **SBC**

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6300 Enterprise Lane • Suite 200 • Madison, WI 53719
608/310-6706 phone • 608/271-7006 fax
www.sbcmag.info • admgr@sbcmag.info