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January/February 2015

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by Sean D. Shields

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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 structural building components. Further, *SBC* strives to ensure growth, continuity and increased professionalism in our industry, and to be the information conduit by staying abreast of leading-edge issues. *SBC's* editorial focus is geared toward the entire structural building component industry, which includes the membership of the Structural Building Components Association (SBCA). The opinions expressed in *SBC* are those of the authors and those quoted, and are not necessarily the opinions of Truss Publications or SBCA.

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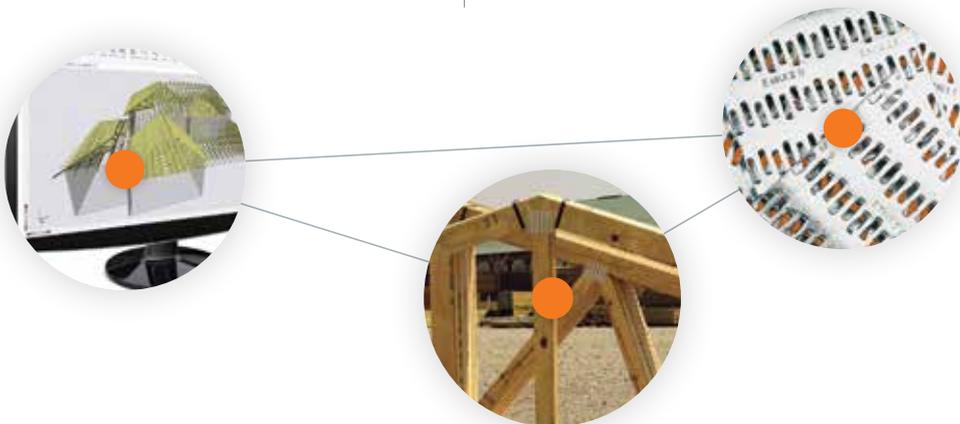
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Suppliers Are the Key to Our Success: Get Them Involved!

Building a relationship of mutual respect and trust takes time and effort.

The last couple of months, I've talked about the importance and value of relationships with those outside the structural components industry, from lawmakers and building officials to framers and specifiers. An obvious group I haven't talked about yet is our suppliers. Given how dependent we are on each other, you could argue our relationships with them are more important than any other. In that context, I want to explore the value and benefit in having them involved in our trade association, both at the national level through SBCA and at the local level through state chapters, and why it's in your best interest to encourage them to participate.

Like most volunteer organizations, ten percent of SBCA's membership does close to 90 percent of the work for our association. There are many component manufacturers (CM) from across the country who regularly participate in SBCA's Open Quarterly Meetings (OQM), but there's so much we couldn't get done without the involvement of our suppliers. From a big picture perspective, our suppliers and their sales networks have a lot of knowledge about the marketplace and trends that we CMs wouldn't necessarily know about or learn about on our own.

Beyond serving as an informational resource, our suppliers bring a valuable perspective to the table that helps us make better decisions for the benefit of the entire industry. In my opinion, one of the best things about being involved in SBCA is hearing the different perspectives CMs and suppliers provide, and how our industry's reasoned response is stronger because of all the wide variety of ideas that are generated. Of course, when we tackle big issues together, our relationships with the suppliers in those meetings grow deeper. Through those discussions, we nurture relationships built on respect and trust.

Respect & Trust

Let's face it, respect and trust are qualities that separate our "go-to" suppliers from everyone else out there. It separates those who I reach out to from those who have to come to me to make their sales pitch. I know I can rely on certain people to get something done at the eleventh hour, and that reliability separates them from all their competitors. In other words, as long as I have a choice, respect and trust are what determine who I give my business to.

Suppliers earn my respect and trust by providing a quality product or service, being consistent and proving they understand my company's success is in their best interest. Regular participation in SBCA and local chapters is a part of that process. By showing up to meetings, listening and giving good counsel when they know something about an issue, they prove they understand our industry's success is in their best interest.

Like any worthwhile relationship, it doesn't just occur overnight. It takes time. Attending one meeting and expecting a ton of new sales leads is probably not going to turn out well for a supplier. A prolonged commitment is the only way to build trust. Prove to me repeatedly that you care more about the success of our industry as a whole than on gaining a customer, and you'll eventually get my business because I trust your motives.

I am very thankful for all of the supplier companies who have shown this kind of

at a glance

- Given how dependent we are on each other, you could argue our relationships with our suppliers are more important than any other.
- Respect and trust are qualities that separate our "go-to" suppliers from everyone else out there.
- Look up and down your supply chain and encourage the companies you respect and trust to participate either in SBCA OQMs or in chapter meetings.

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Editor's Message

Continued from page 5

commitment to SBCA and our local chapters over the years. I'd like to think that part of their success has come as a result of their participation, and I know our industry has grown in a positive direction thanks to their involvement.

This is probably a good time to point out the obvious—these relationships work both ways. It's important for us, the customers, to do everything we can to foster respect and trust among our suppliers. For example, we all know how disruptions cause us to be inefficient. I stress to my employees that not every repair call to our plate suppliers should be an emergency. If we do that, we abuse our relationship with them and, in turn, lose their respect and trust. We only go to them with an emergency when we truly have one.

Face to Face

There is no substitute for face-to-face meetings. I'll give you an example of what I mean. We have a builder in our market who sends some of the meanest, brashiest emails I have ever received. If you show up in his office, however, he can be the nicest guy. When you talk through issues and expectations with him at the table, he is understanding and fine to work with. It's easy to blame email as the root of the problem, but really it's the personal interaction and the give and take that is possible only when you're in the room together.

That's part of the magic of SBCA OOMs and chapter meetings. With all of us sitting in the room together, we can talk through problems CMs face in the marketplace and brainstorm ideas on how to solve them. I'm always amazed at how I learn something new at every meeting I attend, and what I have learned from those who attend.

Scott Ward, SBCA's Past President, and I have become friends over the years through our involvement in SBCA. He's in Louisiana and I'm in Iowa. We don't compete on any level. A few years back, we got to talking about employee incentive programs. I had an effective program for my sales and design staff, he had a pretty good one for his production guys. Due to our friendship, we felt comfortable sharing our programs with each other and I feel confident we'll both benefit from that going into the future.

Selflessness

What I'm trying to say is that our organization, and our industry as a result, is better off the more involvement we have. I want to encourage every CM reading this to look up and down your supply chain and encourage the companies you respect and trust to participate either in SBCA OOMs or in chapter meetings.

To the suppliers reading this, if you aren't already involved, I ask you to strongly consider getting off the sidelines and joining us. Your input is welcome and needed as we help steer this industry into the future. The more you come on board with an attitude of service and giving to the industry, I promise you, the more you will get out of your participation. **SBC**

SBC Magazine encourages the participation of its readers in developing content for future issues. Do you have an article idea for an upcoming issue or a topic that you would like to see covered? Email your thoughts and ideas to editor@sbcmag.info.



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Focusing on Fall Protection Best Practices



NFC's next set of safety guidance will take fall protection one step further.

The National Framers Council (NFC) is working to establish itself as a leader in jobsite safety with its **FrameSAFE**™ program, and its upcoming Site-Specific Safety Plan: Fall Protection program will soon further its reach in the building community.

With the creation of **FrameSAFE** in 2014, NFC addressed the obstacles of staying safe on the jobsite. The next addition to NFC's library, Site-Specific Safety Plan: Fall Protection, focuses on best practices when conventional fall protection methods are either impossible or present a greater hazard to workers.

"The **FrameSAFE** manual comes straight out of OSHA standards, and is a baseline manual for providing a safe working environment for your employees on the jobsite. However, there are situations where some of those directions may be either impossible to implement or risk greater harm to workers on the jobsite. In those cases, we need to create a site-specific plan to do those tasks," said Kenny Shifflett, member of the NFC Steering Committee and owner of Ace Carpentry in Manassas, VA.

For example, in 2011 the Structural Building Components Association (SBCA) released its "Step-By-Step Process for Fall Protection & Trusses" using *Building Component Safety Information (BCSI)* installation guidelines (sbcindustry.com/fall-protection) and includes alternative fall protection methods that comply with OSHA standards. In it, SBCA laid out a process on how to set an initial group of metal plate connected wood trusses, limiting the risk to workers on the site by having them set, brace and sheath the first few trusses individually without the need for protection of handrails, netting or harnesses.

The NFC's site-specific program will take fall protection one step further with solutions for setting floor joists and laying sub-flooring; setting and bracing roof trusses and rafters; and numerous other framing installation topics.

"For every application, the end result is still the same; you have to protect the worker. But the means and methods of how you do it can be different on each jobsite in different parts of the country," said Shifflett.

George Hull, a fellow member of the NFC Steering Committee and owner of Hull Associates, LLC in Grand Prairie, TX, says the site-specific safety plan ensures that OSHA regulations are followed, while recognizing that much has changed in the framing industry and having a specific response to each jobsite is the best approach.

"We're trying to work within the culture of the framing industry, and what we've been taught in the last 35 years," he said. "There are certain characteristics of buildings that don't allow you to have a tie-off point. When there's no effective way to tie off in those locations, we have to use a job-specific best practices approach."

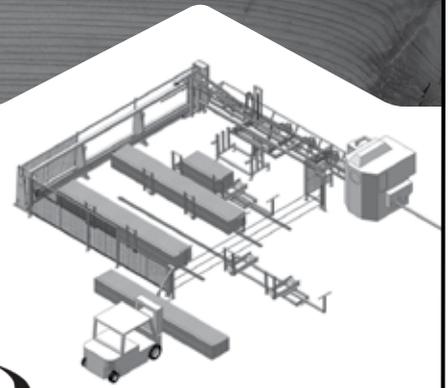
Both Hull and Shifflett pointed out that the increase in builders using structural components makes best practice installation easier. They also agree it is in the best interest of structural component manufacturers to work with framers to create best practice approaches to fall protection. Likewise, component manufacturers should communicate to contractors that installing their components and following best practices is an integral part of using the company's components.

at a glance

- When there's no effective tie-off point for a building, framers have to use a job-specific best practices approach.
- Both Hull and Shifflett agree it is in the best interest of component manufacturers to work with framers to create best practice approaches to fall protection.
- The long-term goal is to host an online database that GCs and framing teams can visit to know who in their industry participates, trains and follows the same safety guidelines.

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Shifflett says **FrameSAFE** and the Site-Specific Safety Plan were born from the need to deliver a standard for safety to general contractors and builders. Once more and more builders train employees and subcontractors on the best practices, the industry will begin to see a widely accepted best practice standard.

“A lot of our lower tier members alternate between different framing companies,” Shifflett said. “They may use their own safety practices. With the **FrameSAFE** program, the more and more people use it, you start seeing the consistency in the market for our workers practicing safety and training the same way. This makes ‘training in’ best practices easier and more consistent.”

General contractors and framing crews often have their own safety manuals outlining broad safety measures for the jobsite. Those manuals may differ from **FrameSAFE** and the Site-Specific Safety Plan, though, and a difference of opinions on the site could lead to a game of whose standards are better.

Hull says the goal of **FrameSAFE** is to prevent that situation by creating one more standardized set of best practices for the industry nationwide that are based on current framers’ practices.

“I think the best practices will have a couple solutions to similar problems. There are two or three ways to do just about everything. Our best practices, if they come out the way Kenny and I are envisioning it, will offer two or three solutions to each problem.”

The long-term goal of setting these guidelines is to host an online database that general contractors and framing teams can visit and know who in their industry participates, trains

and follows the same safety guidelines.

“When a general contractor hires an NFC framer member, they’ll know when they come on the job that they have experience in our best practice guidelines and will follow a set level for safety that they’ll adhere to,” Shifflett said.

For those in the framing industry who may be on the fence regarding joining NFC and following the committee’s developed best practice approach, Hull says he understands their concern and realizes safety wasn’t talked about as much years ago as it is now. But as a contractor himself, he has learned the value of safety.

“As a framing contractor, you’re responsible for so many things. Water intrusion, the structure of the building, there are so many litigious things associated with being a contractor, and fall safety is one of them,” he said. “There are a lot of contractors who say, ‘I can’t afford to be crazy about safety.’ I’ve learned being attentive to safety pays. Do my employees seem happier and more content where there are safety guidelines? Yes. You’re not going to get a check, but you’re going to get better employees and better employee satisfaction.”

The most important aspect of creating best practices is maintaining and evolving these guidelines. Hull insists that NFC won’t ignore input from workers on the job who are doing things differently or more efficiently years from now. “Should we revisit these often?” he asked. “Yes. The council has to keep its finger on the pulse of the industry.” **SBC**

For more information about NFC, visit framercouncil.org.



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To learn more about the FrameSAFE program, visit framercouncil.org/framesafe

2015

by Sean D. Shields

Early in the new year is always a great time to make resolutions on how to improve your life (and your business). Here's a look at five powerful things component manufacturers (CM) can resolve to do in 2015:

1: EXERCISE

your rights as a member of a democratic society.

Your elected officials work for you; it's time you met with them and gave them feedback on the job they're doing. One of the best ways to do this is by hosting a tour of your production facility. Plant tours are easy to set up and host, and give you an uninterrupted hour or more to talk one-on-one with some of the most well-connected individuals in your community on your home turf.

Several CMs have had great success using this approach to build relationships with local, state and federal lawmakers. For example, Zeeland Truss & Components in Zeeland, MI, gave three separate tours recently. "These tours have been a great way to build valuable relationships through showing our community the work we are doing in their backyards," said General Manager Dean DeHoog. "They've also been an effective way to showcase the structural building components industry to the community."

Another example was a recent plant tour Plum Building Systems gave to an Iowa state lawmaker. "Most of our conversation was around employment issues in southern Iowa and the ½-inch gypsum Des Moines building code requirement for floor trusses and EWP," said Rick Parrino, Plum's General Manager.



Iowa State Senator Amy Sinclair toured the Plum Building Systems plant in Osceola, IA in April 2014.

“We discussed how the single membrane requirement exclusion for solid-sawn joists was putting our truss and I-joist sales at a significant competitive disadvantage for no good reason,” said Parrino. “[State] Senator Sinclair agreed to look into who supervises the adoption of the codes and vets the provisions in them, to see if we can fight this code provision through the legislature.”

Add to this the fact there are 67 new members of Congress who start their jobs this month in Washington, DC. It’s likely most (if not all) are unfamiliar with the structural building components (SBC) industry and the important role it plays in the light-frame construction industry. Commit to changing that in 2015—invite one of these lawmakers in and let them see and appreciate the important work you accomplish.

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2: IMPROVE A RELATIONSHIP

with your local building official’s office.

When the housing market tanked in 2007, these departments experienced a double whammy. The Great Recession resulted in lower tax dollars to fund their agencies, and the slowdown in home construction made it necessary for administrators to reduce staff. The result was that many building departments across the country were gutted, and have only recently ramped up hiring.

That means there are numerous green recruits now inspecting buildings who all could benefit from the kind of foundational knowledge found in the *Building Component Safety Information (BCSI)* series of documents (sbcindustry.com/bcsi). You can follow through on this resolution by reaching out to your local building department and volunteering to host an educational presentation for new hires. SBCA has worked with several CMs across the country to create presentations you can use to expose your building officials to important aspects of proper truss installation, code requirements, conventional framing requirements, code compliance and permanent bracing (ctw.sbcindustry.com).

It’s important to note this is likely not a short-term issue. According to a recent survey conducted by the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS) for the International Code Council (ICC), 30 percent of building safety professionals plan to retire in the next five years, and 80 percent will retire within the next 15 years. That significant amount of turnover means the individuals hired today will quickly become “senior” building inspectors before too long. Now is the time to build good relationships with them and expose them to the SBC industry.

Continued on page 12



112 fire service officials from across the country attended a manufacturing plant tour and wood truss workshop at Shelter Systems in Westminster, MD, in June 2012.

3: LOSE MORE WEIGHT

in your design and manufacturing processes.

The theme of BCMC this past year was *Gearing Up for Growth*, and several education sessions focused on best practice ways to go about doing just that. In one session, Donnie Powers, President of Panel Truss Texas, Inc., said, "If you fail to prepare, you prepare to fail." Powers was joined at BCMC by Aaron Roush, General Manager of Villaume Industries, Inc., to share their best practices for increasing production. In that presentation, they outlined ways CMs can effectively evaluate their manufacturing process and plan out how to make it leaner and more efficient all while producing more product.

Rich Ackley, Manager of Truss Ops North, LLC, and Dave Motter, P.E., Structural Engineer of Louws Truss, walked CMs through the concept of optimization and offered up their reasons why companies literally can't afford not to engage in optimization techniques. They stressed that optimization means different things to different people, given the wide variety of costing methods and where value is assigned. Their advice: "Ultimately, in order to optimize, you need to be able to look at the entire process and identify where your bottleneck is," said Motter. "Your pinch-point, whether it's design, production or delivery, is the area where improvement will have the most dramatic impact."

If you make this resolution, the bottom line is to find your pinch-points, evaluate your options and create a plan before you start cutting out the fat in your operations.



The cover sheet of SBCA's Jobsite Packages

can be a very effective front line of defense for CMs. Upon delivery, it clearly separates the responsibilities of the contractor and/or installer from those of the CM by referencing specific portions of *ANSI/TPI 1*, Chapter 2.

While an individual CM may choose to assist the contractor with some of these areas of responsibility, it should be clear to both parties the CM is engaging in an activity outside of their scope of work and should receive reasonable compensation for doing so.

In the near future, SBCA's Jobsite Packages will be available online, and CMs will have the ability to provide customized electronic Jobsite Packages that contractors and framers can access on the jobsite from any mobile device. It's just another way SBCA is striving to help CMs limit their risk and expand the use of the industry best practices contained in *BCSI*.

4: IMPROVE YOUR FINANCES

by further limiting your liability and capturing more value for the goods and services you provide.

This is easier said than done, but it starts by having a strong grasp of the scope of work guidance provided in Chapter 2 of the *ANSI/TPI 1* standard (support.sbcindustry.com/ttdresp). This consensus standard is referenced in the building code (essentially making it part of the law) and should serve as the foundation upon which every CM builds their business practices.

Through a clear grasp of what has been established in the codes as a CM's scope of work, and if the contract of sale is otherwise silent, you have the ability to better navigate the demands of your customers and assign value to the services you are asked to provide beyond your scope of work. Not only will this help you avoid the types of liabilities that customers want CMs to assume, it will also give you a basis to charge for the unique value you provide to your customers that goes above and beyond the industry-defined scope of work for CMs.

5: SET ASIDE TIME FOR YOURSELF

to get more actively involved in your trade association's activities.

If you only want to make one resolution this year, this is the one to make. CMs who attend SBCA Open Quarterly Meetings (OOM), BCMC and local state chapter meetings would agree that the return on investment makes engagement a worthwhile endeavor. (See sbcindustry.com/about/get-involved for details.)

President John F. Kennedy is attributed with saying, "a rising tide lifts all boats." This is certainly the approach of SBCA and its state chapters, to identify effective ways to support the growth of SBC market share and foster innovative framing techniques. While this work can benefit you whether or not you are actively engaged, your involvement gives you the ability to help determine the direction the structural components industry ultimately moves and receive advanced knowledge on the trends of tomorrow.

The next SBCA OOM is March 17-18 in Denver, CO. The CM Roundtable and CM and Supplier Roundtable discussions are the perfect place to hear about emerging trends and opportunities for further growth, as well as challenges in the marketplace that need collective solutions. If you'd rather start on the local level, contact SBCA staff and find out when the next chapter meeting in your market will be held. Lastly, make sure to put this year's BCMC on your calendar; it will be held in Milwaukee, WI, October 20-23 (bcmcshow.com).

All of these resolutions touch upon the issues and activities we plan to focus on (in one way or another) in the pages of **SBC Magazine** during 2015. If you find yourself taking up one of these resolutions, we encourage you to let us know. In our June/July issue, we plan to highlight some of the ways in which CMs have benefited from following through on these resolutions in the new year. **SBC**



One great place to start is by reviewing SBCA's ORisk program (wtcatko.com/orisk). This online training program was developed by SBCA Legal Counsel Kent Pagel to give CMs a strong grasp of the legal liability you may take on through various customer contract provisions and business practices. As an added benefit, ORisk also tackles the meaty issues of better understanding insurance coverages and best practices for filing claims and managing litigation.

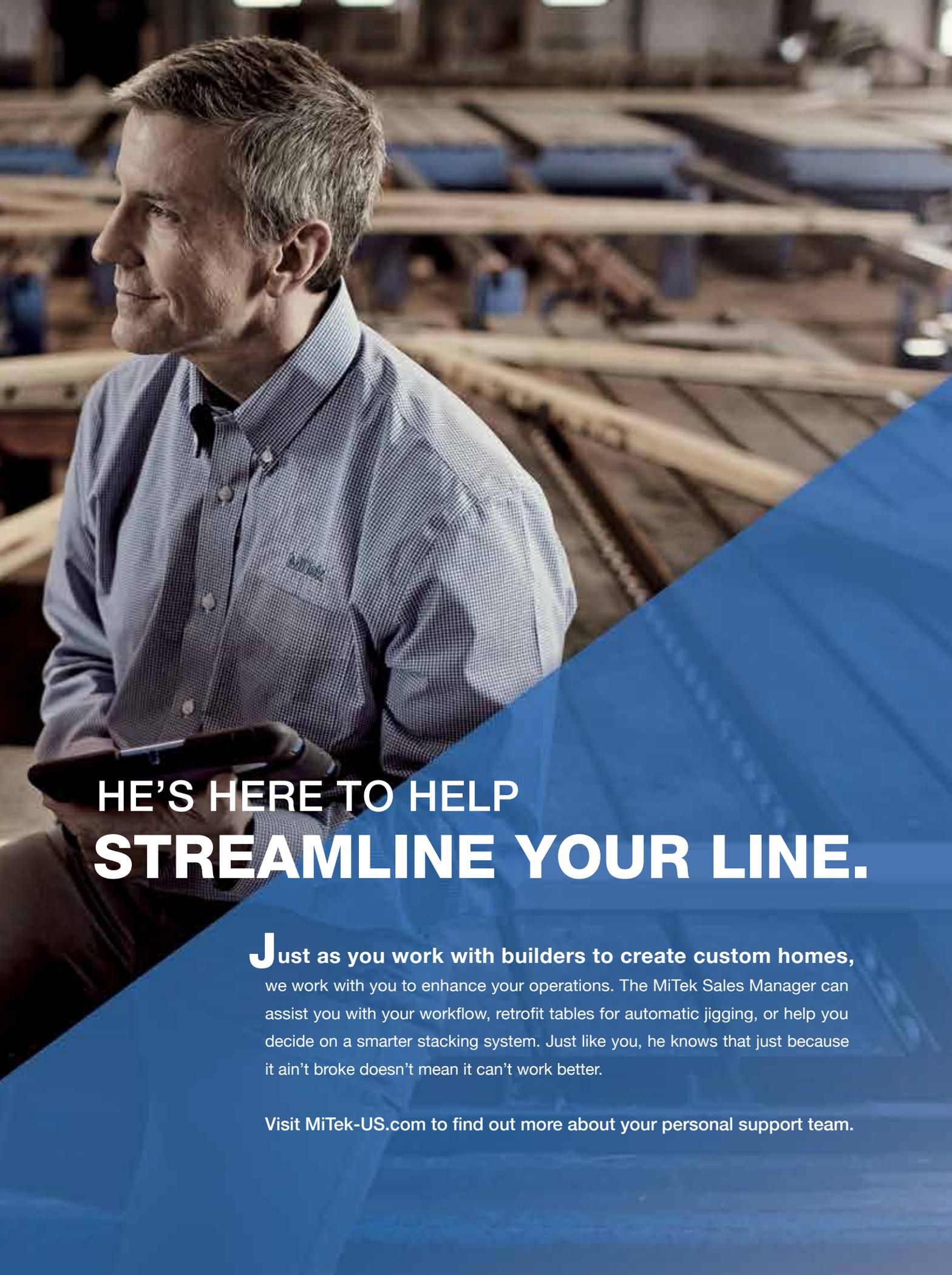
Pagel, SBCA Executive Director Kirk Grundahl and Josh Backer of BMC joined forces at BCMC last October to give a presentation on limiting your liability and understanding the risks you take on through customer contracts and business practices. If you want to tackle this resolution, be sure to sign up when this issue is revisited in an online webinar in the upcoming months.



The July 2014 OOM was held in Madison, WI, and included the first annual Masters Competition. Both will return to Madison in May of this year.



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TOP 10

Employee Training Tools

by Ben Hershey & Sean D. Shields

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Good truck drivers make good decisions.

Truck drivers are given the very important task of transporting a company's finished components from the production facility to the jobsite. The components they haul represent hours of dedicated hard work on behalf of sales staff, designers, sawyers and production employees. It follows that the ultimate success of the company depends on truck drivers doing their jobs well and safely delivering components to customers in a timely manner.

Studies conducted by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) have shown that approximately 88 percent of vehicular accidents were directly caused by unsafe actions taken by drivers. Additionally, according to FMCSA data, a majority of accidents involving commercial motor vehicles were caused by employees with less than two years of experience with a company (regardless of their previous driving experience). Obviously, accidents happen, but through proactive training and monitoring, the goal is to minimize the opportunity for them to occur.

In this article, we will briefly look at various aspects of a truck driver's responsibilities and share some established industry best practices on how company management and drivers can approach those duties in a way that minimizes the risk of an accident. Most of this material is pulled directly from SBCA's **TRUCK Basic**

Driver Training program. If you find this information useful, you may want to consider taking a closer look at this program (see wtcatko.com/truck/).

Making Good Decisions

Having truck drivers who make good decisions and avoid unsafe actions starts with the hiring process. Finding individuals to drive trucks who have the type of experience that fits in well with the types of loads the components industry delivers is a difficult task. A growing economy, coupled with a surging energy boom, is creating a high demand for men and women with commercial driver's licenses (CDL). While drivers are necessary to deliver product to the jobsite, the consequences of hiring and trusting someone who makes bad decisions behind the wheel can expose a company to risks that can put

it out of business quickly. In today's environment of short supply, it may be

more advantageous to hire someone who can be trusted to make good decisions and pay for them to earn their CDL.

The components that truck drivers haul represent hours of dedicated hard work on behalf of sales staff, designers, sawyers and production employees.



In evaluating potential truck drivers, after reviewing their driving record, ask to take a look at their personal vehicle. While drivers shouldn't be judged on the type of car they drive, the care they take to keep their personal vehicle clean inside and out, as well as evidence they keep up preventative maintenance, says a lot about how they will treat the company's equipment.

Another simple test is to ask a potential hire to show you how they get in and out of a truck cab. Do they use all the hand and foot holds when climbing in and out? Do they keep their center of gravity over their feet and then climb in easily, or do they have a tendency to swing in or out? This simple act can be one of the most common sources of personal injury for drivers. A driver who gets in and out of their cab in a safe and methodical manner exhibits the ability to make good decisions and avoid unsafe actions.

Vehicle Inspection & Maintenance

A commercial motor vehicle (CMV) is a significant capital expenditure that needs to last many years in order for a company to achieve a reasonable return on the investment. The longevity of a CMV and its associated equipment (i.e., trailer, tie-downs, tires, etc.) is tied directly to the care of the driver responsible for it. Care begins with regular and thorough pre-trip inspections. While a driver should automatically conduct a standard inspection before each trip, they shouldn't be on autopilot when they do it. The driver needs to have a critical eye for everything from engine fluid levels to unusual tire wear. Each trip exposes a vehicle to debris that unwittingly can be kicked up by tires and damage equipment. A driver who makes the bad decision of assuming everything is okay is a recipe for potential accidents or a broken down CMV on the side of the road.

Pre-trip inspections help ensure small issues are caught early so that maintenance can be done before major equipment failures occur. Having a regular preventative maintenance schedule for all CMV equipment (including trailers and load securement equipment) complements driver inspections to keep CMVs



The longevity of a CMV and its associated equipment is tied directly to the care of the driver responsible for it.



Truck drivers are ultimately responsible for ensuring a company's final product arrives undamaged and ready to install.

running smoothly and cost effectively while also increasing vehicle life expectancy.

Cargo Loading & Securement

While cargo loading is typically accomplished by forklift drivers and a material handling crew, the driver is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the cargo is loaded properly and adequately secured for transport. Once the vehicle leaves the yard, if anything goes wrong with the load (e.g., product comes loose and falls off the truck), the driver is held accountable for noncompliance with the law and/or resulting property damage.

With regard to cargo load and securement in the components industry, there isn't a huge difference between a CDL driver with 15 years of experience driving box trucks or hauling dry van trailers and a driver with only two years of professional driving experience. The irregular shape and size of the products hauled by the components industry, combined with rigorous federal load securement requirements, means that practically every driver will need to be trained from scratch. One exception to this may be taking experienced

material handling workers and helping them earn their CDLs.

When initially evaluating one truck driver candidate versus another during the hiring process, taking them out to the yard and asking them to identify what to look for in cargo positioning and advise on how they would secure a load of components can provide good insight into their ability to critically assess load distribution and positioning. For example, do they naturally understand why an oversized load of roof trusses should always have the bottom chords flush with the driver side of the trailer and the peak hanging off the passenger side of the trailer?

Just as thorough pre-trip inspections of their vehicles and equipment should be a natural part of their process before they drive, drivers should be in the habit of inspecting their cargo before it's secured to the trailer. In the same way, load securement can be a straightforward process, but that does not mean it's easy or

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On the jobsite, drivers are responsible for much more than just effectively offloading components.

Training • Continued from page 17

can be done exactly the same way for each load.

Again, drivers are responsible for the load and its securement once they leave the plant, so it makes sense they should be the one to secure it. Given the many configurations of components, and the order in which they are stacked, the total weight and its distribution changes from load to load. A driver needs to be able to assess those aspects of the load in order to properly choose the number and location of tie-downs. This is most effectively learned through repetition and experience. It may be a good idea to have a veteran driver present to observe and provide guidance while new drivers assess and secure their loads until proving they are proficient at it.

Cargo Delivery

A company's truck drivers are unique in that they typically operate with-

out supervision. While occasional ride-alongs by management can be a good way to ensure drivers meet or exceed company expectations, for the most part, drivers are on their own. Yet, they are ultimately responsible for ensuring a company's final product arrives undamaged and ready to install. Further, drivers are a company's customer service agents on the jobsite.

Once they arrive at the jobsite, drivers are responsible for much more than just effectively offloading components. They should also be responsible for: distributing handling and installation instructions (i.e., Jobsite Packages); documenting product delivery (many CMs require their drivers to take digital photos of each component package delivery to ensure damage or poor storage was not the fault of the company); assisting with installation (depending on the market, the components may be craned and either

set on the top plate or installed individually); and ensuring those who receive the company's products are happy before they leave the jobsite.

Add to this the fact that offloading components is not always an easy or straightforward process. There are many risks inherent in material handling on a jobsite populated by other tradespeople. To address some of those risks, a group of CMs worked with SBCA to create the **Safety Zone** program. It's an industry-specific, best practice guide for truck drivers to follow to create a safer environment in which to deliver components, depending on whether a roll-off trailer, a forklift or a crane is used to offload product.

Conclusion

Truck drivers are responsible for some of a company's most expensive capital expenditures (CMVs), shoulder a significant amount of company risk (hauling product on public roads with large, heavy vehicles, sometimes at high speeds), and are the public face of a company on each jobsite they visit. It's easy to see why it's so important to choose and train individuals who are proficient at making good decisions and are deliberate in how they take on and accomplish their duties. **SBC**

Ben Hershey is a Past President of SBCA and Owner of 4Ward Consulting Group - Experts in Lean Management & Manufacturing. Material Handling will be covered in the March issue.

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CAUTION

Machine Guarding

Protect Your Most Important Assets

by Molly E. Butz

The introduction to the primary OSHA Standard for Machinery and Machine Guarding (1910.212 General requirements for all machines) states very simply that, “one or more methods of machine guarding shall be provided to protect the operator and other employees in the machine area from hazards such as those created by point of operation, ingoing nip points, rotating parts, flying chips and sparks.” Simple as it sounds, Machine Guarding continues to place on OSHA’s Top 10 Most Frequently Cited Standards; for the 2014 fiscal year, it ranked number nine. That ranking (and many previous years’ rankings) makes it clear that, while one of the most critical concerns in a manufacturing facility, machine guarding isn’t as simple or easy as it sounds.

What Makes Machine Guarding So Difficult

The keys to adequate machine guarding rely heavily on safeguards (physical guards or other devices) that can do several things: prevent contact with a hazard, be secure so that it cannot be easily removed or modified, protect the machine from errant objects falling into the moving parts, create no new hazards, create no interference from performing a job quickly and easily, and allow for safe lubrication.

However, safeguards can only satisfy these requirements for the hazards that have been identified. What often makes machine guarding difficult is not in the actual guarding practice, though that can bring its fair share of complications to the table, but in the assessment and identification of the hazards each machine presents.

While it would be ideal if each piece of machinery, from component saws to multi-ton presses, arrived at a CM’s facility with a comprehensive safety system installed and a safety training manual to accompany it, the realities of this scenario are neither likely nor practical. Each piece of machinery needs to be assessed in situ to ensure that **all** hazards can be identified, including those presented by the area surrounding the space where the machine is installed.

Employer Responsibility

OSHA places the responsibility for machine guarding in the hands of the employer, rather than the equipment manufacturer. However, the majority of the safety equipment your new machinery will need should be and will be installed at the time it’s manufactured. New machines are often manufactured with safety in mind and are available with many of the proper safeguards installed. However, you are still responsible for a thorough risk assessment of all equipment, new and old alike, to ensure **all** machine and site-specific concerns are addressed.

If you currently own or have purchased older/used equipment, it’s likely you’ve encountered damaged or missing guards or devices. It’s possible they never existed, but that doesn’t mean they’re unwarranted and, thankfully, it doesn’t mean you can’t get the right guarding in place.

To repair or replace guards, you can usually purchase what you need from the original equipment manufacturer (OEM). OEM guards are often the best option because they were designed specifically for the form and function of the machine. On the downside, they can also be more expensive. Another option involves custom-made guards from an aftermarket manufacturer.

**In 2015,
SBCA’s Management
Committee will review
the issue of machine
guarding and begin
working with compo-
nent manufacturers
and equipment manu-
facturers across the
country to gather and
develop best practices.**



A third option is to build the guards yourself. In this case, the quality of the design and manufacture needs to be a priority and, especially for user-built guards, can also be reason for concern. On the plus side, you'll be able to control costs while devising guards for machines that meet the legal requirements but also more readily meet your unique manufacturing needs.

It's important to note that warning signs and labels should never be mistaken as an adequate means to abate a potential hazard. At best, they are useful reminders for machine operator(s) and visual hazard indicators to other employees in the area.

Think Outside the Guard

While a physical guarding solution for many hazards is obvious and straightforward (e.g., a shield, a hood, a bumper), there are plenty of other circumstances that don't present a clear fix. In some cases, the physical guard causes a "greater hazard" to the operator; we wrote about this in the August 2007 article, "On Guard: A Closer Look at Safeguarding Your Manufacturing Equipment." When a path to mitigation isn't clear, creative solutions are in order. There are a number of new, exciting products on the market that do things like stop spinning saw blades in milliseconds. But there are also plenty of tried and true modern answers for complicated hazards. Devices, like light curtains, lasers, pressure sensitive safety mats, dual hand controls, palm buttons, foot switches and many more, provide additional options for eliminating or controlling hazards.

Training

Your machine guarding can only offer maximum protection if the people operating, maintaining and working near the equipment are properly trained and understand how it works. OSHA identifies several crucial factors for a thorough documentation and training program, including:

- Identifying the hazards and providing a description for each.
- Identifying each of the physical guards and/or devices and defining which hazards they protect against and how.
- How to appropriately use the safeguards.
- Who can remove the safeguards and why (maintenance, repair, etc.).
- Protocol when a guard is missing, damaged or malfunctioning.

Employee buy-in for machine guarding is also critical. Getting upfront input from the key people operating your equipment is vital as you look to update or enhance guarding to ensure solutions that are both safe and have a good dose of common sense attached. Going forward, guarding should be an integral part of your training.

Start the Process

In addition to 1910.212, there are several other OSHA standards and appendix references that apply specifically to machine guarding. All told, they hold hundreds of requirements. To complicate the subject, these same standards also

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Machine Guarding

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refer to, and therefore also can enforce, requirements in numerous non-OSHA standards including 20-plus ANSI standards as well as *NFPA 79*, the Electrical Standard for Industrial Machinery.

It's easy to see that *this* article is just the tip of the proverbial iceberg, but it's important to have a baseline awareness of the issues that surround machine guarding. In 2015, SBCA's Management Committee will review the issue of machine guarding and begin working with component manufacturers and equipment manufacturers across the country to gather and develop best practices.

Clearly, it's *not* simple, but you have to start someplace. With nearly 6,000 occupational amputations reported in 2011 alone, one thing *is* clear—machine guarding is imperative. Even if you think you have a serious machine guarding puzzle, rest assured a solution can be found and you have several options for finding it.

Where to Begin?

- **Get involved:** Join the SBCA Management Committee and work with component and equipment manufacturers toward an industry-specific Equipment Safety Standard.
- **Roll up your sleeves:** Utilize your safety committee or create an equipment safety task force to assess the equipment and put together recommendations.
- **Call your workers compensation carrier:** Their risk consultants will have tools and expertise you can use to drill down into the details and come up with some answers.

Your efforts just might save a finger, an arm, or even a life. **SBC**

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off their old picture frames, find the oldest industry-related photos you have that underscore our industry's early successes (whether they are of people, projects, production lines, or component designs) and send them our way. You can scan them and email them to editor@sbcmag.info, or mail them to us and we can scan and mail them back to you. **SBC**



In 1996, two identical 2,600 sq. ft. homes were built side-by-side. One was conventionally framed, the other was built with engineered components. The project, called Framing the American Dream (FAD), gathered time, material and motion data to compare the differences between these two framing methods.

For the past two decades, the component industry has used the FAD data in a wide variety of marketing materials and presentations to encourage builders and framers to consider using componentized framing solutions. Given today's rising cost of building materials and significant shortage of framing labor, now is the perfect time to take a fresh look at the FAD project and collect new comparison data.

In 2015, SBCA is working with Operation FINALLY HOME to construct two identical, mortgage-free homes for wounded veterans in southeastern Wisconsin. One will be conventionally framed, the other will be built with engineered components, and both will go to deserving individuals. Contact SBCA staff if you are interested in getting involved or donating to this project. **SBC**

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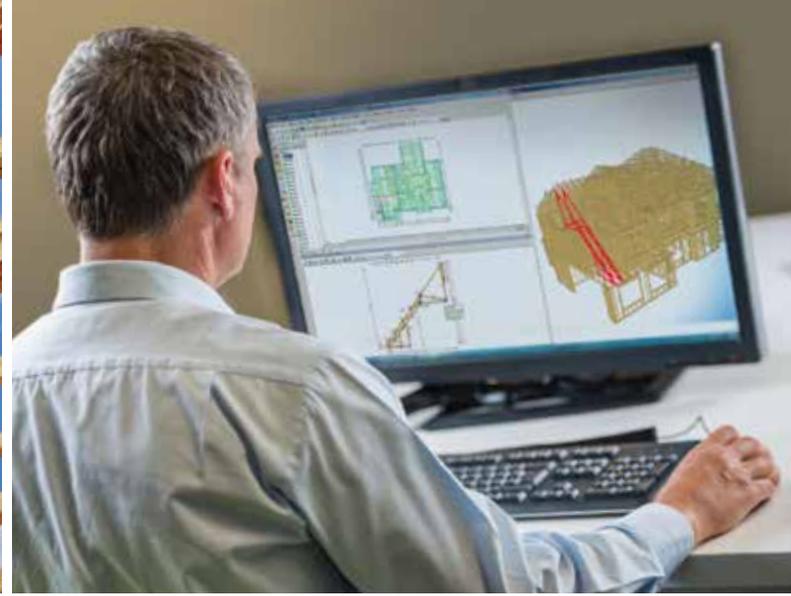
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