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Pacific Northwest Regional Council of CARPENTERS

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Happy New Year!

Here we go again, heading into another year, hoping this year will be the one that brings turnaround and we will see increased construction activity. It’s been really tough to survive through these difficult times; however, overall, our industry players are pretty much all still around, which shows me we have a lot of well operated companies in our group. Well, keep hanging in there! Hopefully we are close to seeing our market conditions improve.

When I became President of the NWCB, one of my goals was to get our young people more involved with our industry. To start the year on that note, we had chapter programs here in the Northwest on the topic of generational differences. We are hoping to engage the young professionals in our industry on an on-going basis, and I would ask all of our members to let their younger staff know about the Bureau and how it can help them. Invite them to Bureau meetings and let them—and your company—benefit from the good and timely content presented at each event.

With the darkest and coldest winter months at hand, it is nice to start thinking about the Northwest Wall and Ceiling Industries Annual Convention and Trade Show coming up in April in Rancho Mirage, California. The Bureau staff has been busy working on putting on an outstanding event for us. I’m looking forward to attending good meetings and seminars, getting in some golf and having fun in the sun. It is that one time each year when we see many of our industry friends from all over the U.S. and Canada. Kathie and I really enjoy the friendships we have developed over the years. Start planning now to attend!

Steve Henricksen, NWCB President
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A new year is upon us, and along with it are the opportunities that accompany change. In response to these new opportunities, many of us have made New Year resolutions: exercise more, eat better or maybe improve a specific aspect of our businesses or industry. At the NWCB, we have done the same. We have made the commitment to do everything we can to assist the industry in adapting to the continuing changes around us.

One major change is the new energy code. The revisions to the code have more stringent insulation requirements that will have a significant impact on how exterior cladding systems are installed. These revisions make some of our industries cladding systems, such as EIFS, even more attractive to architects and building owners. This is because of their inherent design capabilities that meet the new energy code requirements. In October and November, the NWCB held seminars in Seattle and Portland that specifically addressed many of the changes related to the new energy code. These seminars were well attended by architects, general contractors and construction professionals. We will be having more educational programs in the future that we will let you know about.

The Holiday season always gives me the opportunity to reflect on the things I’m most thankful for. Family, friends and the wonderful industry that we work in are just a few of the things I truly appreciate. Once again, all of you in our industry came through for our Toys for Tots campaign. You donated nearly two thousand toys to the underprivileged boys and girls here in the Northwest. Thank you for opening your hearts to help this fabulous organization and the kids it supports.

A great deal of volunteer time and effort is contributed each year by the NWCB’s Board of Directors members. I truly appreciate the time, effort and resources these individuals contribute to our industry. Their leadership will guide us well into the future. This year’s convention marks the end of two very dedicated Board of Director member’s terms. Steve Henricksen and Paul Cochran will both be completing their terms and turning their duties over to new officers. Steve has been our President for the past two years. His unwavering support, years of industry experience and down-to-earth personality have made him a wonderful leader. Paul has been our Financial Officer for the past eighteen years. The sheer number of times that Paul has been reelected to the two-year position of Financial Officer speaks very powerfully of how much he is liked and respected. Paul’s attention to detail, broad vision and ability to find a bit of humor in almost any situation help make him the outstanding person that he is. This is bittersweet; we look forward to working with our new officers but Steve and Paul will truly be missed.

Mark your calendars to join us April 18-20 for the NWCB 2013 Convention and Trade Show in Rancho Mirage California. This is the perfect time to revitalize your senses by taking in some much needed sun and warm weather, catching up with industry friends and continuing your industry education by attending informative training seminars. In addition, you can spend time golfing, sightseeing or just relaxing by the pool. This will be an event you won’t want to miss.

Mark Eisenmann, Executive Director
Northwest Wall and Ceiling Bureau
As the saying goes, “the only constant is change,” and evidence of this is both the recent and upcoming changes in the Oregon Chapter of the Northwest Wall and Ceiling Bureau and in the Associated Wall & Ceiling Contractors of Oregon and Southwest Washington.

Most of you are aware that Jim Young’s retirement two months ago left a void in Oregon’s NWCB architectural consultant and chapter services.

Since November 1, I have assumed those responsibilities in addition to representing our contractors association and the Oregon & Southwest Washington Walls & Ceilings Industry Promotion Fund, but all of this is about to change. After 40 years of serving as Executive Director of Oregon’s contractor association and also having served as Executive Director of the Northwest Wall & Ceiling Contractors Association in Seattle for 28 of those years, I have announced my retirement.

By the end of February, the selection of my successor here in Oregon should be concluded and announced. A selection committee of four contractors has been receiving letters of interest and resumes, and they are now engaged in the interview process. The new hire will initially serve in both capacities as the NWCB Oregon Chapter representative and as the association’s Executive Director. This should strengthen the symbiotic relationship of the two organizations. The contractors and I are all confident and optimistic that the right person serving in this dual capacity will move both organizations forward for years to come.

As for our Wall & Ceiling Industry market conditions in Oregon, since the beginning of 2009 up through and including the year just concluded, most of our contractors have been in survival mode. With the exception of three company owners who retired and closed their business, they are still here and looking forward to better days. With a number of good-sized projects coming out to bid and Intel planning more construction, 2013 looks to improve over 2012, but nobody is predicting a building boom over the next several years. The main problem of union contractors here is the fixed labor costs, which put them at a disadvantage when bidding projects. Over the past 37 years, I have seen the “circle of wagons”—or union market—continue to shrink. It started in 1975, when we lost the entire housing market. Then in the 1980s, came the erosion of the tenant improvement work and light commercial construction, and finally, larger commercial projects. Today the projects for which our contractors come close to being first choice are those that require fast-track completion and, frequently, assistance in financing the job.

Well, after all that good news, don’t think we in Oregon are all gloom and doom. Since the world didn’t end on December 21, and since the opportunity still exists in our great country for motivated, hard-working people to pursue and earn success, that is exactly what we will do. Our contractors will continue to work toward improving not only their lives but those of their hundreds of well-paid employees. All of us in the Wall & Ceiling Industry in Oregon look forward to a healthy, happy and prosperous 2013 and beyond.

British Columbia

Leesa Matwick
Assistant Executive Director
BC Wall and Ceiling Association

Murray Corey, Executive Director of the BCWCA has announced his retirement effective April 30, 2013. Murray will be working part time until April 30, 2013 and he looks forward to seeing all his friends and colleagues in the industry at the upcoming NWCB Convention. “We are pleased to announce the appointment of Leesa Matwick to the position of Assistant Executive Director effective January 2, 2013,” Corey said.
Continuous Insulation
A Means of Meeting New Energy Code Requirements

Terry Kastner, NWCB Technical Consultant

For Wall & Ceiling Contractors, implementation of the Energy Code will have a dramatic effect on the construction of exterior wall assemblies. No longer will insulating the exterior walls simply consist of installing an R-30 batt insulation between studs. Batt insulation helps to insulate the wall but does nothing to prevent the heat loss from window systems and little to compensate for the thermal break from light-gauge metal studs.

One of the primary goals of the Energy Code is to take measures to prevent the loss of heat from the building structure. To meet the new energy code, buildings will have to achieve a U-factor predicated upon their specific region/climate zone. A U-factor is a rating based on how much heat loss a system allows. U-factors generally range from 0.2 (very little heat loss) to 1.2 (high heat loss). The U-factor is the inverse of the R-value which measures insulating value. One of the most effective means, there are others, of achieving a low U-factor and minimizing heat loss from thermal conductivity in the wall assembly is by installing Continuous Insulation (CI) outboard of the metal studs or sheathing. Continuous Insulation is an insulation that is continuous across all structural members without thermal bridges other than fasteners (i.e., screws and nails) and service openings. It is installed on the interior or exterior wall system or is integral to any opaque surface of the building envelope. Insulation installed between metal studs, z-girts, z-channels, shelf angles, or insulation with penetrations by brick ties and offset brackets, or any other similar framing is not considered continuous insulation, regardless of whether the metal is continuous or occasionally discontinuous or has thermal break material.

Continuous Insulation

The challenge, of course, is how to incorporate Continuous Insulation with exterior claddings. One-coat and even traditional, three-coat stucco assemblies have, over the years, incorporated rigid foam insulations. The Northwest Wall and Ceiling Bureau has recognized the benefits of Foam Insulation and Stucco assemblies and provides information in Technical Document 600-615. The Western Conference of Wall and Ceiling Institutes and the Technical Services Information Bureau (TSIB) in Southern California have been at the forefront of CI and Stucco assemblies and provide comprehensive information and detailing in their brochure The Energy Code and Plaster Assemblies (www.tsib.org) for both Stucco and EIFS assemblies.

In addition to stucco over Continuous Insulation, we really don’t have to look very far to find the perfect cladding to meet the new energy code, Exterior Insulated Finish Systems (EIFS).

One of the primary benefits of EIFS claddings has always been the energy efficiency of the system. Now, with the code-mandated energy requirements and the improvements made over the years, (drainable EIFS with a fluid-applied, water-resistive barrier) we should begin to see a significant resurgence of EIFS claddings. This is not going to be without its challenges. There are a lot of owners and architects out there that seem to want to live in the past. Instead of recognizing the energy code advantages of EIFS and simply asking what steps have been taken to improve these systems to eliminate the problems of the past, they still choose not to entertain the use of EIFS. It makes you wonder where the world would be, if rather than improving on systems that experienced certain challenges, we chose instead to “throw the baby out with the bath water.” Perfection is not achieved by giving up, it is achieved by working through the problems and challenges that we face and making improvements to those systems that could very well provide the logical answer to specific demands. Let’s open our minds and take another look, and I am certain that you will see that the logical answer to meeting the Energy Code requirements for a Continuous Insulation Finish System is the vastly improved Exterior Insulation Finish System.

—Terry Kastner is Technical Consultant for Northwest Wall and Ceiling Bureau.
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FOLLOW US on Twitter to stay connected, learn about cool new projects, and get exclusive product offers.
twitter.com/ArmstrongCIS

YOUTUBE
SUBSCRIBE to our YouTube Channel for step-by-step product installation videos that can make your next job go faster, easier, better.
youtube.com/armstrongceilings
The days of 2D drawings are quickly being replaced with 3D models. More and more of the construction industry is following suite with the Architectural and Engineering world by adopting the BIM (Building Information Modeling) process. The evolution of the BIM process for building core elements has advanced quickly, while shell/façade framing is still in the process of catching up. BIM has proven to be a vital asset when time and money can be committed upfront to a project. The modeling process has proven to help reduce the amount of RFIs or field conflicts that are created during construction since all trades are able to check one another’s modeled framing prior to any installation. This level of details shown in a model is dependent on the client’s requests and needs. There are five different industry accepted levels of modeling which may be requested. Those levels are as follows:

100 The equivalent of conceptual design. The model consists of overall building massing, non-geometric data, line work, areas, and volumes zones.

200 Similar to schematic design or design development. The model consists of generalized systems or assemblies with approximate quantities, size, shape location and orientation in three dimensions.

300 Model elements are suitable for the generation of traditional construction documents. Contains specific elements with confirmed 3D object geometry. All major structural elements shown on the construction drawings are provided in the model.

400 This level of development is considered to be suitable for fabrication and assembly. Typically produced by the trade contractor or fabricator with a majority of the parts and pieces incorporated into the model. Includes all the elements shown on plans or details and would include such things as: plates, parts and pieces. Fasteners are not typically modeled.

500 This level of model development represents the project as it has been or will be constructed with all elements being modeled. This level of modeling is often referred to as As-built/Record conditions or a virtual mock-up.

When it comes to a building’s core structure, minimal detailing (Level 300) is often required for simple beam or column framing. This is not the case with light gauge framing. As light gauge framing becomes more intricate, and contractors and designers both trying to push the limits of design, the need for 400 level coordination models is becoming more prevalent. These advanced models are increasingly being used to coordinate connection locations, splay wire supports, MEP penetrations, material clearances, etc. This advanced coordination often comes at an additional upfront cost to the framing contractor during the development of shop drawings/models since the construction documents or BIM models (when available) are not sufficiently detailed for fabrication. An example of this would be the use of typical notes by the engineer of record limiting the placement of connections, splices, supports, bearing conditions, anchorage, etc., which are not generally coordinated within a level 300 model or conventional 2D construction drawings.

It is anticipated that the next step in the BIM evolution would be the incorporation of Level 500 as-built models following the completion of a project. With this direction, one of the hurdles being faced in the light gauge industry is the lack of graphical representation which can be shown in the BIM models. The industry, at this time, is behind in BIM when it comes to light gauge framing, but is making advancements every day to progress how light gauge framing is being shown in models. Many light gauge manufacturers are beginning to develop BIM compatible resources for their products so they can be quickly and correctly implemented within 3D models. It is anticipated that as BIM continues to prove that it is a valuable asset for planning and coordination, the overall cost savings to a project will become more apparent. However, since the technology and systems is still developing for light gauge framing, additional time will be needed to support this position.

Riley J. Mahaffey, Principal, P.E., LEED Associate, with Jared Keller, Associate, P.E., Dana Hennis, S.E., P.E., and Nick Hrico, EIT
Energy Codes

Codes are constantly updated to make a building’s design and construction safe and efficient for the general public. These codes can vary from structural to mechanical and electrical to energy efficiencies. With the public emphasizing more “green” facilities, a conscious effort is being made by most designers to reduce the amount of energy a building consumes during its lifetime. There are many benefits to green design, such as LEED certification and reduced yearly building cost to the owner.

With the adoption and evolution of the current energy code, a ripple effect can be seen in the light gauge industry, specifically to exterior facades. The energy codes are becoming more stringent regarding the exterior envelope of buildings and heat loss due to thermal bridging; whereas continuous material spans through a wall cavity and creates a bridge for the cold, or heat, to travel through the material from one side to the other. Many building designers are opting to use rigid exterior insulation to satisfy code requirements, while unaware of potential construction impacts that may be incurred. Perhaps the most difficult to overcome is that once the rigid insulation has been installed, no penetrations of the insulation or subsequently applied damp proofing membranes are allowed.

More often than not, light gauge contractors are also responsible for the installation of exterior facades. After the light gauge contractor has installed framing members, the exterior sheathing, and the rigid insulation, there is no way of attaching the exterior façade back to the structure without penetrating the rigid insulation or damp proofing membranes. Stucco, EIFS, siding, and other lightweight materials have not had the same complications as the heavier and bulkier systems that require anchorage back to the building structure or substrate. Historically, veneer systems have anchored directly to the sheathing and provided an air gap between the sheathing and the veneer of approximately an inch. The requirement for continuous insulation between the veneer air gap and the sheathing increases the attachment point for the anchorage farther out from the face of sheathing. This results in the need for stronger and often thicker clip systems.

With regards to damp proofing, veneer clips are typically placed as needed during the installation of the veneer system. The typical liquid applied membranes being used today do not allow for clips to be installed after product is sprayed on, and this presents a major hurdle. The systems we are employing today to frame this type of a system is a vertical Z-furring with a horizontal hat channel or another Z-girt. This system, however, interrupts the continuous insulation requirement, but with minimal thermal bridging. It is anticipated that as the energy codes continue to develop, all thermal bridging will be eliminated, and the Z-girts that we are using now to attach through the insulation may be eliminated resulting in cost prohibitive approaches for exterior heavy veneered finishes.

When these situations arise (which most of you have probably encountered), early coordination between the contractor and the design team can be crucial. The most effective time for identifying these conflicts is prior to construction for Bid-Build projects or during design for Design-Build. At the very least is should be done before material has been ordered and/or mock-ups built.

Strapping And Web Crippling

As light gauge framing is being used for bearing systems across the Northwest, building officials and plan reviewers are becoming more aware of its limitations. One of the major areas of concern that building officials have is with bridging and web crippling. Wall bridging can come in two major types, namely a pre-manufactured bridging channel which runs through the punch outs in the webs of the studs, or full stud blocking and straps. Each of these systems can become a sticking point with some contractors due to the time and money required to install these systems. The bridging system is crucial in the overall design of light gauge framing since it helps stabilize studs against buckling or twisting. Often times bridging may be eliminated if sheathing is to be provided on both sides of the framing; however, the sequencing of supported loads with the installed sheathing or other proposed construction techniques also play a role in when bridging is required. Another common condition is when sheathing is only provided on one side of the wall. For these conditions, bridging is needed to prevent the unsheathed flange of the C-stud from buckling on itself.

As the need for greater insulation cavities arise, deeper studs are being used. A limitation that we face with metal studs is the depth-to-thickness limitations in the codes. The code has limitations on how thick a metal stud needs to be in regards to its depth before the web needs to be stiffened. These web stiffeners come into play at each point of support along the length of any stud. Therefore, this can be a substantial add to a project if it is not recognized in the early design phase. These stiffeners help to prevent web crippling at the points of support where the stud is deep but thin.

The light gauge industry is growing more and more complex with each new set of codes that come out. As codes get more complex, so does the light gauge framing industry. Whether the codes address energy, design loads, or even the overall design procedure of the light gauge framing, the AEC industry needs to embrace the fact that light gauge systems are not as simple as they once were, but as a whole, we can work with one another to develop and maintain high standards in the area of light gauge.

—Established in Las Vegas, Nevada, in 1995, Lochsa Engineering has become a leading firm around the world, offering structural, civil and traffic engineering. In 2003, Lochsa Engineering of Idaho opened its doors. The firm’s extensive experience and core competency has permitted the firm to complete numerous light gauge projects in the areas of Municipal, Renovation/Remodel, Government, Commercial, and Private Sector. Lochsa’s dedication to practical, yet innovative design solutions and outstanding client service has earned the company the reputation for excellence in the industry. The firm holds licenses in 50 United States and Alberta, Canada; British Columbia, Canada; and Ontario, Canada.
2013 Convention Set for Rancho Mirage, CA

The 2013 Wall and Ceiling Industries Annual Convention & Trade Show will be held at the Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa in Rancho Mirage, California, April 18-20. This event is the largest gathering of wall and ceiling industry professionals on the West Coast, drawing attendees from Western Canada and throughout the United States. You will find delegates from all the major West Coast wall and ceiling industry associations meeting, collaborating and strengthening our industry.

This year’s event theme is “PERFECTING YOUR GAME.”

It’s your opportunity to access the latest industry information by participating in meetings, seminars and exhibits. Golf and fun social events allow you to network with your peers and industry partners in a relaxed setting. The 2013 Outstanding Project of the Year Awards will be announced at the opening session on April 18.

The event is built around a trade show with the latest industry products, systems and services on display. Booth reservations are now being accepted online as well as by contacting the NWCB staff. The exhibit hall will be hosting special meal events, competitions and there are no competing events during exhibit hours. This year’s show will feature a stage on which special competitions and sponsor demonstrations take place.

Rancho Mirage, one of the many desert communities of the Greater Palm Springs Oasis in the sunny Coachella Valley, is located approximately 110 miles southeast of Los Angeles and 140 miles northeast of San Diego. Both Alaska Air and West Jet are offering airfare discounts to our delegates. All the details are posted online.

The area offers fantastic desert golf, unique outdoor adventures, world class shopping, great restaurants, night-life and entertainment. With more than 350 days of sunshine a year and only 5.2 inches of annual rainfall, the area is a sun seeker’s paradise. So, pack your summer clothes for a great springtime getaway!

The Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa features 240 acres of tranquil lakes, gardens and fountains and offers a wide variety of recreational activities and luxurious accommodations for business travelers and families alike. The Spanish hacienda-style resort is a perfect combination of luxury and relaxed comfort. You will enjoy your spacious guest room with plush bedding and French doors that open onto a private patio or balcony. Golf enthusiasts have easy access to the adjoining country club’s 27 holes; tennis buffs can take advantage of the hotel’s 25 courts. The resort’s recently renovated European spa offers a relaxing and rejuvenating retreat and a wide array of professional spa and beauty treatments.

Learn from powerful seminars:

- **Putting the Brakes on Assumptions**—Discover new opportunities while reducing stress levels and creating more effective relationships.
- **Jumping in the Driver’s Seat**—Improve your leadership skills and cultivate personal productivity.
- **Construction ICRA**—Best Practices in Healthcare Construction
- **Mitigating Stucco Litigation**
- **EQ Stud Assemblies**
- **Acoustics—The Signal and the Noise**

See the latest products, systems and tools.
Build your network of contacts in North America.
Enjoy golf, tours and social events.
Experience a luxurious, fun and friendly resort.
Rancho Mirage is a great family destination. The entire family will enjoy the warm weather and the resort - especially the swimming pools, water slides and the sandy beach! The concierge can help arrange childcare by a licensed and bonded sitter. Families are welcome to all the convention events. Spouse registration can be added to the delegate’s convention registration for just $99. Reduced cost meal tickets are available for children 5-12. Please contact NWCB for details.

Convention registration is available online at www.nwcb.org, where you can also download pdf versions of the convention information and registration forms. Take advantage of the early-bird rates available until February 20.

Guestroom reservations can be made by calling 1.866.423.1195 or access an online reservations link at www.nwcb.org. Our group rate at the Rancho Las Palmas is $190, plus taxes and government assessments. The room reservations cutoff date is March 26, 2013, or earlier if the block sells out. The room rate is valid three days before and after the convention, based on availability. Note that the resort fee has been waived for our group. When calling for reservations, please identify yourself as being part of the NWCB event.

Please visit nwcb.org for complete information on the convention, plus follow NWCB on Twitter and Facebook and visit the convention blog for late-breaking news on the convention. Get your room reservations in and register for the convention today. We are looking forward to seeing you in Rancho Mirage in April!
Economic situations dictate all types of behavior. Contractors have options when business and the economy is booming, including the ability to be selective about the types of projects to bid. When the economy is down, contractors experience a more competitive marketplace—fewer projects to bid and more competitors to bid against. Because of these dynamics contractors must differentiate themselves from the competition.

Each Subcontractor (SC) needs to ask the question—“Why Me?” The General Contractor (GC) is certainly asking the question—“Why this subcontractor?” Why should the GC select one SC over another? What does the GC look for? What are the selection criteria? What makes an SC not simply the lowest bidder but the best bidder? What needs to happen to secure this win as well set alignment to win the next several bids? The answers to these questions are important to GCs, Developers or Owners. It is imperative to provide reasons why the price isn’t the only way to determine the winning bid.

Scope of Work

Everyone wants “it” for less but expects more, and it begins with the owner. They want the architect to give more but design for less; the architect wants the GC to deliver more but build for less; following suit, the GC wants the SC to do more work faster but do it for less; and finally the SC wants the supplier to lower their costs but deliver ahead of full payments. Is less more? Is more less? Confusing, to say the least. A thorough and complete understanding of what is being asked of the SC is essential.

What exactly does the bid contain? Knowing the intimate details of the project is the SC’s foundation for building trust with the GC. Using a color-coded digital takeoff provides a way to easily identify the details of the quantitative measurements. A visual representation of the takeoff simplifies information sharing and will easily set one SC apart from another. Going a step further, inserting color-coded legends on the pages of the documents enhances the understanding of the takeoff. These documents are then ready to be printed or saved as PDFs for mailing and/or emailing to the appropriate parties.

The bid should be flexible with the quantity takeoff in order to be summarized by bid package breakdowns, building areas or phases. The ability to drill in and out of the estimate will allow an SC to provide a level of detail not often communicated to a GC. Leverage the power of digital communication to share the details of the project with the GC. A “live takeoff” demonstrates a full comprehension of what the work will entail and that the bid submitted has all aspects under consideration. Sending a takeoff file (in a protected status) to be viewed by the GC is powerful. The SC has aided the GC by providing a more thorough understanding of the project details. In turn it provides the GC a higher level of confidence in the SC and partnerships begin with this trust.

Critical Communication

All relationships sink or swim on communication, and this is inherently true of business partnerships, including those between GCs and SCs. There are critical communication times during the takeoff and estimating process. It is essential to be as descriptive as possible when completing a request for information (RFI) or change request (CR). The longer time goes between the SC identifying an issue and the GC learning of the issue, the higher the probability that there will be a breakdown and profitability will go out the window.

There are some SCs that still lug a set of plans to the copying machine and attempt to align the area where the issue resides. At best this copy is likely printed and/or faxed in black and white and sent to the GC. The more efficient and effective way is sending the plan section in question electronically; retaining the color-coded takeoff and imbedding hot links to details, photographs, and specification documents. This includes items discovered by the SC or submitted via change orders. The power of digital overlay (placing a set of revised plans over the original plans) identifies within seconds that part of the original plan that is ‘dead’ (colored red) and that which is ‘new’ (colored blue).

Online digital takeoffs, the ability to copy current views of the plans, and instant communication of changes via any digital online device are incredibly beneficial. Rather than waiting for the plans in the mail or deciphering the fax that came through; using his laptop, tablet, smartphone or other device, the GC has an email with all of the information that illustrates the issues at hand. Putting the right information in the right hands at the right time empowers a person to make informed decisions. It ultimately saves time and money while reducing labor risks.
**Itemizing Scope**

Flexibility and adaptability are key traits of a valued SC. GCs often have requests that need immediate response. For example, the ability to quickly present price scenarios for various scopes of the project demonstrates to the GC that the SC has complete understanding of the project. The most efficient way to handle these ad hoc requests is by leveraging automation that separates the bid into areas and/or phases.

Dynamic reporting that shows bid detail and summary by selected area allows the SC to respond quickly and accurately to the GC. As mentioned earlier, the information is sent electronically ensuring that the response is in the hands of the GC ahead of the competition. A greater level of detail added to an estimate enables the SC to be more nimble and provide varying price scenarios when requested.

Scope ultimately determines if you win or lose a bid. Being flexible with scope is best done with a collaborative takeoff and estimating process. While it is possible to provide specific information on an estimate manually, it is not likely that doing so is efficient or timely. Automation assists in bid condition detail identification and makes reassigning bid items to different CSI sections very powerful.

Each effort the SC makes to help the GC understand the price and align it to the scope of work elevates the value delivered. Building a long term relationship with a GC is an ongoing process. Don’t make the GC guess what is meant in the estimate. Be clear and elaborate on the qualifications provided.

**Crew Allocation for Scheduling**

GCs look for quality across the project—from bid to closeout. There have been many modifications to crews across the last 3 plus years. SCs have reduced overall crew numbers but have been able to retain top talent. Quality of work ranks among the most sought after traits of a SC. A close second is staying on schedule. When the project is under construction, a valued SC helps the GC build on schedule, at least the part the SC is providing, and become an “A” team player.

S.M.A.R.T. objectives have long been a part of corporate office culture but it is time to take this to the construction site. Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound goals have a place with the field crew. The more that work is laid out for crews in precise, track-able, do-able, understandable, and scheduled ways, the more likely the crew is to deliver exactly what is needed in the time allotted. A crew managed with S.M.A.R.T. standards has a much greater probability of delivering higher quality with fewer punch list items.

Stocking reports let the SC know exactly where and when materials are needed so that the crew isn’t idle. Placing materials and crew in the same place sounds simple - but even 15 min of lost work time chips away at profitability. Staying on top of hours worked and materials used keeps the SC’s site manager informed of possible overruns. Using automated job cost reporting, the SC monitors a job to date status.

**Jobsite Coordination**

Each jobsite is unique and has its own set of challenges, but the work activities performed remain similar across jobs. GCs need SCs who are proactive and learn from previous work. Ongoing education and training of the crew should be a normal course of business. They should be trained on equipment, safety or construction automation methods. Investing in a good crew will deliver quality and productivity to the project.

The SC needs to know where the crew stands compared to schedule. The jobsite foreman should close each day by walking the site and indicating what work has been completed. This is easily done using a tablet in the field – no need to be in the office or trailer or standing at the gang-box waiting for someone else to indicate results. This information is then easily shared with the office immediately over an internet connection. Identifying the percent complete and color-coded results indicate whether the crew is on or off schedule and whether the project is or isn’t profitable.

The real question that SCs need to ask themselves is “Do I know where I am going?” It is one thing to know where the project budget stands after payroll is posted. After all, hindsight is 20-20. Leveraging project management automation, the SC sees where the crew has worked but most importantly it will control where the crew will work next. Reactive project management simply allows SCs to notify the GC that there are problems, but by the time adjustments are made, another week is gone and the magnitude has increased. When the SC controls where the project is going, he is being proactive which allows problem resolution upfront.

**Conclusion**

It is challenging to describe the relationship between General Contractors and Subcontractors. Whether a GC or SC, each person has their own story to tell. Love the GC—Hate the GC. Can’t live with SCs—Can’t live without SCs. Both are tied to one another. The GC that respects and collaborates with the SC understands that the financial wellbeing of the SC is critical to the wellbeing of the GC. SCs that take the time to identify a differentiating value proposition will be recognized by the GCs. SCs need to build a positive reputation and be the trusted provider of trade business for the GC, who in turn will reward these efforts with repeat business and on time payments. Given the smaller and smaller, or perhaps nonexistent backlog of work (and carryover profits) that SCs currently are facing, they realize the dilemma they face—united we stand, divided we fall.

To listen to a webinar on this topic click on [ww2.oncenter.com/NWCB_W01](http://ww2.oncenter.com/NWCB_W01)

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**Angelo M. Castelli is Vice President of Operations for On Center Software, Inc. Mr. Castelli’s responsibilities include Direct Sales, Channel Partners, Marketing, and R&D. In addition, he serves on the firm’s executive Vision Team, a think tank for the future of construction automation.**

He brings 10 years of commercial construction experience that includes chief estimator, project manager, and team management. Mr. Castelli was instrumental in the creation and deployment of On Center Software’s business development and plan room programs. As a result of his vision, On Center Software solutions are used in over 200 academic institutions as required curriculum courses for construction management degrees. Mr. Castelli’s first-hand knowledge of estimating and project management delivers a very partner and business focused leadership across his responsibilities.
Regardless of how your side fared in the recent elections, the results revealed just how much our society is changing. Some issues that not all that long ago would have been considered taboo by many, if not a vast majority of voters, were recently approved by voters. This is an indication of our society changing before our very eyes. Most of us realize that change is happening around us; economics have certainly changed significantly from four or five years ago. We are now dealing with Construction Managers and General Contractors/Construction Managers instead of just a General Contractor.

It is said that most people hate change. We tend to react by resisting change. One of the keys to success is to embrace and adapt to change. This does not mean that you need to change your core values. What it means is that we need to be looking for ways to maximize the new opportunities around us and let go of the tactics with dwindling levels of success. Those who are unable or refuse to adapt to the changes around them go extinct; those who manage to adapt to their changing environment tend to flourish. Charles Darwin’s theory of Natural Selection has a proven track record. When Europeans first arrived in North America there were millions of Passenger Pigeons. There were also a few Coyotes who were able to manage to stay out of the way of much larger and more plentiful predators. Today the Passenger Pigeon is extinct. Wolves and other large predators were practically wiped out in the United States; yet, the Coyotes are increasing in population even moving into suburbs and cities eating our pets as they successfully adapt to their changing environment. As this example indicates we have the choice to either adapt (change) or disappear.

Market conditions are not good, and it is very difficult to get work, especially profitable work. “Why risk making changes now?” you might ask. Some of the best and most creative ideas have come out of stressful times like those our industry faces today. When things are going well, it is easy to just accept the status quo, but when faced with trials, we tend to sharpen our skills just to survive.

A group of contractors, representing four contractor associations on the West Coast, who understand that we cannot continue to be successful in the long term just doing things the same old way, have joined together to form the National Building Institute. The concept of The National Building Institute was birthed when representatives from the Northwest Wall & Ceiling Contractors Association (NWCCA), the Associated Wall and Ceiling Contractors of Oregon and SW Washington (AWCC), Wall and Ceiling Alliance (WACA), and the Western Wall and Ceiling Contractors Association (WWCCA) gathered together to investigate how they could work together to find solutions to help meet mutual needs of their Interior and Exterior Subcontractor members of these four Associations. They recognized that there is strength in numbers and that they happen to have a unique and large resource of technical talent and knowledge. The National Building Institute is a contractor-driven, contractor-directed organization focused on increasing access to more market share for the member contractors of the represented associations (one of those key mutual needs). Our corporate goal was brought into focus by a White Paper written by Mr. Mark Fowler, formerly of the NWCB, now working for the WWCCA, on a unique concept to increase market share for member contractors by taking advantage of the abundance of technical resources we have here on the West Coast from the NWCB, WACA and WWCCA. By developing specific construction system designs to meet our customer needs while elevating the workmanship of our crews through certification of advanced skills, we can create more opportunities for our member contractors.

The construction industry, as a whole, has long been perceived as a career of last resort for those who can’t make it in other roles in our society. Drywall contractors, in particular, have to overcome the common perception that anyone can do a Drywaller’s Job. The reality is that it takes very intelligent and talented personnel to decipher the designer’s intent and build some of the very sophisticated systems such as load-bearing framing systems, building-envelope systems, seismic protection systems, and
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fire-life-safety systems that our crews encounter on a daily basis. The unfortunate reality is that, for many, their perceptions become what they tend to believe to be true. One of the long-term keys to the success of our industry is to change this perception that is accepted as a truth by many of our customers. We can elevate our industry above a perceived commodity by bringing the value that we can and do add to our customers and their customers into focus.

We have chosen what we believe to be the quickest path to success, and that is to promote these changes at the local level using local and personal connections. NBI has no intention of being some heavy-handed organization of outsiders trying to force our ideas on to a local population. Rather we intend to work with local contractors, local tech experts, and local designers to elevate the standards and building a new and better perception of our industry. Through the combination of the extended resources now available to all of us, this is a goal that now is within reach.

The NBI idea is catching on fast, and we are currently in discussions with several other trades concerning pooling of resources and cooperation across the board to accomplish our common goals.

On January 10, 2013, NBI Board of Directors met in Seattle and set in motion the process to implement real change in and lifting up of our industry. If you should any questions concerning the goals and/or actions of the National Building Institute please contact any of the NBI Board Members representing your area to discuss your questions.

The National Building Institute has scheduled our first General Membership Meeting in conjunction with the Northwest Wall and Ceiling Industries Convention at the Rancho Las Palmas Resort April 18-20, 2013. This meeting will be open to all members in good standing of the various Contractor Associations that are part of the National Building Institute. Please plan on attending to learn more about The National Building Institute and a real opportunity to increase your potential in this market.

Neil O’Connor was recently named CEO/Executive Director of the National Building Institute.
In my youth, the differences between people of varying age groups was just beginning to be recognized and acknowledged. The Baby Boomer generation introduced awful, loud, rock and roll music, boys’ hair was too long, we redefined the meaning of words like “cool” and “far out” and girls wore hip hugger - bell bottom pants. As we reflect back to that era of the 1960’s, the Beatles seem rather mild compared to the likes of rappers such as LMFAO, 50 Cent or Nelly. Today, boys’ hair might be long or short, spiked or colored blue, red, yellow or green. I’m not sure of the redefined meaning of words such as “sick,” “dank,” “rad” or “posted.” Now some of what divided my parents and me brings me together with my kids. We enjoy listening to classic rock, we laugh at the language we each use, and many of the current clothing styles are similar to the 60’s and 70’s.

Generational differences appear in all areas of life, and we especially see these differences in the workforce. As improved health extends people’s lives, our economy shifts to less physically demanding jobs, individual’s financial concerns and the desire to work longer—we are experiencing a larger and larger generational gap. The number of people between the ages of 65 and older still working has nearly doubled since 1988. The overall number of working Americans has fallen by 4.4 million since the recession began five years ago. Many of these workers have dropped out of the workforce due to the frustration of not being able to find employment, and some people have been forced to retire early. In spite of this, the number of Americans 65 and older who continue to work has jumped nearly 25 percent during this same five-year period. Some of these older people continue to work as doctors, professionals or retailers, and others have started their own businesses.

To one extent or another, all companies wrestle with the issues created by generational differences. The Northwest Wall and Ceiling board of director’s President, Steve Henricksen, recognizes the opportunity that we must capture by getting our young individuals involved in our association and industry. His “Youthification” program is beginning to gain some traction and will deliver benefits to our association with the participation of younger generations in the future.

So how do we minimize our generational differences for the good of our companies and the industry? Let’s start with understanding what makes up the various generations. Most studies categorize the current workforce into four groups.

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Generational Differences

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The first is the **Traditionalist** generation. This is the oldest generation in the workplace, with most individuals already retired or passed away. Born prior to 1945, they were deeply influenced by the Great Depression and World War II. They have been described as being conservative, disciplined, and as having a sense of obligation; their word is their bond. They believe in paying their dues, have a great deal of respect for authority and tend to hoard stuff. This generation has been characterized as loyal workers, highly dedicated, averse to risk and strongly committed toward teamwork and collaboration.

The second is the **Baby Boomer** generation. The Census Bureau defines this segment as individuals born between 1946 and 1964. They make up the largest segment of the US population. Boomers witnessed and participated in the political and social turmoil of their era such as the Vietnam War, the civil rights movement, the Kennedy and King assassinations, Watergate, the sexual revolution, Woodstock and the freewheeling 60’s. They have been known to equate work with self-worth, contribution and personal fulfillment. Boomers have been characterized as individuals who believe that hard work and sacrifice are the price to pay for success. They started the workaholic trend. They like collaboration and group decision-making, believe in loyalty, and have been described as having a sense of entitlement. Boomers value the chain of command and may be technically challenged.

Next is **Generation “X.”** These individuals were born between 1965 and 1977. This generation has also been called the Baby Bust generation because of its small size relative to the generation that preceded it. They witnessed their parents getting laid off and the decline of American global power. They grew up with a stagnant job market, corporate downsizing and are the first individuals predicted to earn less than their parents did. They have grown up in homes where both parents worked or single parent households because of high divorce rates and because of this, became known as the latch-key kids, forced to fend for themselves. They were influenced by MTV, AIDS, world competition and are accustomed to receiving instant feedback from playing computer and video games. They aspire more than previous generations to achieve a balance between work and life outside of work. Having grown up as latch key kids, they are more self-reliant, independent and more autonomous than previous generations. They are not overly loyal to their employers although they have very strong feelings of loyalty towards their family and friends. Xers have strong technical skills, are ruled by a sense of accomplishment and not the clock. Money is not necessarily their motivator yet the possibility of the absence of money is. Even though they are independent, they also like teamwork more than boomers.

Finally we have **Generation “Y.”** These individuals were born between 1978 and 1999. Some of the labels associated with this generation include Millenials, Nexters, Generation www, the Digital Generation and the Feel Good Generation. They have been shaped by parental excess, computers, and dramatic technology advances. One of the most frequently reported characteristics of this generation is their comfort with technology. Yers share many of the same characteristics of Xers. They value team work and collective actions embrace diversity, and they are optimistic and adaptable to change. They seek flexibility, are independent, desire a balanced lifestyle, are strong multi-taskers, and are our most educated generation.

One of the major factors that contribute to our generational differences is the perception that the work ethic has declined. Generation X for instance has been labeled the “slackers” and employers complain that they are uncommitted to their jobs, only working the required hours and little more. On the other hand, Boomers are labeled workaholics and reportedly started the trend. Yet Traditionals have been characterized as the hardest working of all. The prevailing stereotype is that younger workers do not work as hard as their predecessors.

A subject that continues to be debatable is whether the younger generation works as hard as the previous one. One item that appears to be conclusive by various studies is that younger workers typically have a more idealized view of work than older workers. This generally leads to a greater willingness to work longer hours than the average worker. Numerous other factors beyond generational factors affect the work ethic of employees. For instance, work ethic varies with education levels, income and marital status. The lower the education level the higher their work level has been found to be. People with low incomes and those who are married tended to be harder workers.

Most characterize Traditionalists and Boomers as being extremely loyal toward their employers and feel there is a lack of loyalty of younger workers, especially Xers and Yers. Many believe that Xers may value their relationship with fellow co-workers more than their relationship with their employer. This perception of loyalty to their employer may be unfounded. When the frequency of job changes of Xers and Yers is compared to other generations, when they were the same age, the frequency of job changing was much closer, giving the conclusion that frequency of job changing may be a reflection of age rather than generation. Members of all generations share similar reasons for staying with their organizations. Factors that were likely to increase employee loyalty included opportunities for advancement and promotions, opportunities to learn new skills, potential for challenges, and better compensation. In addition, employees were also more likely to stay if the company’s values matched theirs.

Attitudes toward authority and respect appear to be different between generations. Research indicates that authority may be valued more by the Traditional generation than by others. For example Xers and Yers are very comfortable with authority figures and not impressed with titles or intimidated by them. In addition they find it natural to interact with their superiors, unlike their older counterparts. This can be perceived as conceited by older
generations. When it comes to respect, younger workers want to be respected although the understanding of respect differs among the generations. Older generations want their opinions to be given more consideration because of their experience and for people to do what they are told. Younger generations want to be listened to and have people pay attention to what they have to say. They don’t expect extra consideration. Once again the question is; are these differences generational or just age-related?

Training styles differ slightly between generations. All generations prefer to learn “soft” skills such as phone systems, intercompany communication, or mail, on the job. Xers and Yers also preferred to learn “hard” skills, such as sales and management training, computer software systems, and corporate functions, on the job as well. The majority of Traditionalists and Boomers prefer to learn hard skills through classroom instruction. It has been determined that the reason that Xers and Yers prefer both soft and hard skill training on the job is that younger generations desire immediate feedback while older generations are somewhat sensitive to feedback. The desire for immediate feedback has been attributed to the younger generation’s interaction with computers and computer games. It has been found that Traditionalists and Boomers desire skills training in computers while Xers and Yers would like training in leadership. The desired methods and the perceived training needs may differ between generations but the common thread is that they all note that training is a key ingredient to work satisfaction.

What we learn, where we get information and how we apply the information that we receive continues to evolve and change. Recently I had a conversation with a seasoned plastering craftsman. He’s been a plasterer for over 35 years and is still going strong. We discussed the differences in how work is performed today versus 25 years ago. He explained, “In the old days, the craftsman depended on their industry experience to resolve constructability issues. Today, we use the internet to look up details and product information. We used to depend on experience to get our mix perfect; today we use premixed products.”

One thing that is truly recognizable with the Xers and Yers is their desire to achieve a balance between work and life. This desire appears to stem from them seeing their parents, the Baby Boomer generation, work extremely hard, make tremendous life sacrifices, yet in many cases, they lose their jobs do to corporate downsizing and layoffs. While there are many differences between generations, many of the differences become blurred because these differences may just be age dependent. For example, as the Xers and Yers get older and take on more responsibility such as home mortgages, life partners, and have children, their desire for a life balance looks as if it becomes less distinguishable. They appear to become more accepting of the work imbalance that can be created from the pressure of being a family provider.

One characteristic that is shared by all generations is the desire to have the freedom to set their own hours and the flexibility to work from home. Unfortunately many work environments won’t allow employees to do either of these. It is important that managers recognize these wishes and do what they can to accommodate them, even if it is only on an occasional basis. All generations also like participating in discussion groups, peer interaction, mentoring programs and one-on one coaching.

Traditionalists, Boomers, Xers and Yers, are we really all that different? Once we understand the major impacts on each other’s lives and how they influence each of us we begin to understand people’s behavior and why people do what they do and react the way they react. We must be careful because trying to understand people only by categorizing them as a specific generation may be helpful, but it may also be misleading. We need to go beyond the generalizations and ask questions to really understand the influences on everyone we interact with. Only then can we truly understand our coworkers, associates and friends. Good communication is essential for people of different generations to be able to get along. In the words of the author Therone Shellman: “When one educates themselves to communicate, they learn how to deal with a multitude of types of people.” If people of all ages develop and practice good communication skills, many of our generational differences will no longer exist.
CALENDAR

NWCB NORTHWEST CHAPTER

Wednesday, February 20, 2013
“Building a Culture of Constructive Dispute Resolution”
Sheraton Bellevue Hotel
100 - 112th Ave NE, Bellevue, WA

Wednesday, March 20, 2013
“New Products Showcase”
Sheraton Bellevue Hotel
100 - 112th Ave NE, Bellevue, WA

For more information, contact NWCB in Seattle at 206.524.4243 or visit www.nwcb.org.

NWCB OREGON CHAPTER

Wednesday, February 13, 2013
“Building a Culture of Constructive Dispute Resolution”
HBA Conference Center
15555 Bangy Road, Lake Oswego, OR

Wednesday, March 13, 2013
“Legislative Update”
HBA Conference Center
15555 Bangy Road, Lake Oswego, OR

Thursday, May 16, 2013
Oregon Chapter Spring Golf Tournament
Stone Creek Golf Club
Oregon City, OR

For more information, contact NWCB Oregon Chapter at 503.295.0333 or go to www.nwcb.org.

All dates published here are subject to change. Please check with your local chapter or go to www.nwcb.org for the latest information.

BRITISH COLUMBIA WALL & CEILING ASSOCIATION

Wednesday, May 22, 2013
Annual General Meeting
Location TBA

Please visit www.bcwca.org for information on the Lower Mainland Chapter and Southern Interior Chapter dinner meetings and Vancouver Island lunch meetings.

BCWCA LOWER MAINLAND WALL & CEILING ASSOCIATION

Sunday, June 9, 2013
BCWCA Family Cancer Walk
Campbell Valley Park, Langley BC

Wednesday, September 11, 2013
2013 LMWCA – Annual Golf Tournament
Newlands, Langley
Please visit www.bcwca.org for details

BCWCA SOUTHERN INTERIOR WALL & CEILING ASSOCIATION

Friday, June 15, 2013
2013 SIWCA Annual Golf Tournament
Michaelbrook Ranch Golf Course, Kelowna

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The Northwest Wall and Ceiling Industries Annual Convention and Trade Show, to be held at the Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa in Rancho Mirage, California, is the largest gathering of wall and ceiling industry professionals on the West Coast, drawing attendees from Western Canada and throughout the United States. You will find delegates from all the major West Coast wall and ceiling industry associations meeting, collaborating and strengthening our industry.

This year’s event theme is *Perfecting your Game*. It’s your opportunity to access the latest industry information by participating in meetings, seminars and exhibits. Golf and fun social events allow you to network with your peers and industry partners in a relaxed setting.