

WOODSHOP

NEWS[®]

Shaping the Successful Shop[™]

www.woodshopnews.com

December 2013

So close, yet so far away

Littleton Millworks
reaches well beyond
its local market

*The sticky wicket
of VOC regulations*

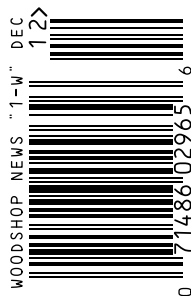
*Adding services
to increase profits*

*Case for lacquer
goes beyond cost*

NEW TOOLS

- Festool Carvex
- Supernova spray gun
- Rikon 14" band saw
- Rockler router fence

\$3.95 (Canada, \$5.95)





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SPECIAL EDITION BANDSAWS

INTRODUCTORY PRICES!

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FEATURES:

- Deluxe extruded aluminum fence
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- Rack-and-pinion guide post adjustment for upper blade guides
- Cast iron wheels

SPECIFICATIONS:

- Motor: 1 HP, TEFC, 110V/220V, single-phase (prewired 110V)
- Amps: 11 at 110V, 5.5 at 220V
- Cutting capacity/throat: 13 1/2"
- Max. cutting height: 6"
- Footprint: 23 1/2" x 16 1/2"
- Table height above floor: 43"
- Table tilt: 45° right, 10° left
- Frame construction: cast iron
- Precision-ground cast iron table
- 2 blade speeds: 1800 & 3100 FPM
- Blade size: 93 1/2" long
- Blade width range: 1/8" – 3/4" wide
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G0555LANV

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FEATURES:

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- Micro-adjusting geared table
- Blade height scale measurement
- Blade tracking window
- Includes 1/2" blade

SPECIFICATIONS:

- Motor: 2 HP, 110V/220V, single-phase, TEFC capacitor start induction, 1725 RPM, 60 Hz, prewired 220V
- Amps: 20A at 110V, 10A at 220V
- Power transfer: Belt drive
- Precision-ground cast iron table
- Table size: 17" x 17" x 1 1/2" thick
- Table tilt: 10° left, 45° right
- Floor to table height: 37 1/2"
- Max. cutting height: 12 1/8"
- Blade size: 131 1/2" long
- Blade width range: 1/8" – 1" wide
- 2 blade speeds: 1700 and 3500 FPM
- Wheels: computer-balanced cast aluminum with polyurethane tires
- Wheel covers: pre-formed steel
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- Approx. shipping weight: 342 lbs.



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G0513ANV

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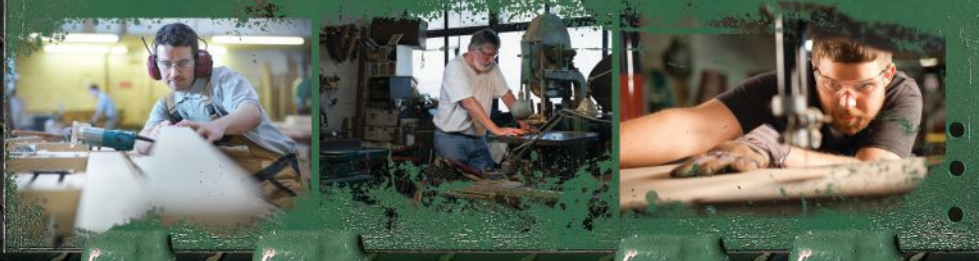
Since its inception in 2002, the Executive Briefing Conference (EBC) has become the premier venue for key manufacturing executives to network and explore visions for the future. The conference provides a collaborative venue for businesses of all sizes to explore concepts, learn about new technologies and gain insight from an international perspective into what the future may hold.

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presented by Cam Marston, Generational Insights
- Keeping Design Creativity Alive: The Role of the Designer
presented by Judy Wolgast, Principal, jwolgast designs
- What Skilled Workers of 2020 Will Need to Know
presented by NewNorth Center
- Succeeding in the New Economy
presented by Alan Beaulieu, President, ITR Economics
- Managing and Controlling Costs
presented by John Lasky, Techline
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All the Components You Need for Every Project on your Bench



Bridle Round
Bun Foot



Contemporary
Rope Island Post

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BLOGS



Over the Workbench

Talkin' shop with former editor A.J. Hamler



This Business about Woodworking

Share an opinion with David DeCristoforo but don't expect to be right

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TAKING STOCK

with TOD RIGGIO

Two recent rulings stir up some controversy

In this issue, Christopher Hoffman uncovers the country's "confusing quilt of VOC rules and jurisdictions" and suggests a national standard isn't far behind. While our great bureaucracy contemplates, the EPA has proposed two rules aimed at "protecting the public from the risks associated with exposure to formaldehyde."

The first proposal would implement formaldehyde emission standards and apply to hardwood plywood, MDF, particleboard and finished goods containing these products that are sold, supplied, offered for sale or manufactured (including imported) in the United States.

The second proposal would establish a framework for a third-party certification program to ensure that composite wood panel producers comply with the established emission limits.

The first rule includes provisions for testing requirements, product labeling, chain-of-custody documentation and other record-keeping requirements. The second rule lets the EPA pick the third-part certifiers that would enforce the standards.

The rules have drawn the ire of the composite wood products industry.

"The single most costly and burdensome aspect of EPA's proposed rule is the agency's decision to disregard the California Air Resources Board, Kitchen Cabinet Manufacturers Association and others on the treatment of laminated products," Kitchen Cabinet Manufacturers Association vice president Dick Titus said in a statement. "Congress gave EPA authority to adopt the approach of the California Airborne Toxic Control Measure. Instead, EPA has proposed to, in effect, ban adhesives containing any urea formaldehyde."

"KCMA is concerned about the impact this rule would have on thousands of small businesses, especially cabinetmakers and their component suppliers. Cabinetmakers, who veneer on a kitchen-by-kitchen basis, would be subject to the same regulation as six plywood manufacturers who account for 80 percent of the market and who produce hundreds

of millions or billions of square feet of commodity products each year. [The California Air Resources Board] recognized the distinction between panel producers and fabricators. Under CARB rules, fabricators are required to use certified composite wood, maintain usage records and label their products as compliant, but unlike EPA's proposal, there are no costly additional testing, certification, quality control requirements and paperwork burdens, many of which could be duplicative."

In other news, hardwood plywood from China does not injure the U.S. industry and will not be subjected to antidumping duties, the U.S. International Trade Commission ruled Oct. 5.

In a 5-0 vote, the commission went against a Sept. 17 final determination by the U.S. Department of Commerce that Chinese hardwood plywood sold in the United States is subsidized at less than fair value.

The commission ruled that the U.S. wood industry is neither materially injured nor threatened with material injury by reason of imports of hardwood plywood from China.

The decision was applauded by the American Alliance for Hardwood Plywood, comprised of more than a dozen importers, distributors and manufacturers of hardwood plywood.

"The ITC ruling brings an end to a year-long campaign to impose severe and unprecedented antidumping and countervailing duty rates on imported Chinese hardwood plywood that would have resulted in severe disruptions to the kitchen and bath cabinet industry, eliminated thousands of jobs and shifted labor to overseas competitors," the alliance said in a statement.

The Coalition for Fair Trade of Hardwood Plywood, a group of domestic manufacturers that filed an unfair trade petition in September 2012, said it was deeply disappointed with the ruling.

"We do not believe that the ITC's determination is reflective of the facts presented in this investigation or the realities of the marketplace," coalition counsel Jeff Levin said in a statement. **W**

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30TH ANNIVERSARY 14" BANDSAW

- Motor: 1 HP, 110V/220V, single-phase, TEFC
- Precision-ground cast iron table size: 14" sq.
- Table tilt: 10° L, 45° R
- Cutting capacity/throat: 13 1/2"
- Max. cutting height: 6"
- Blade speeds: 1800 & 3100 FPM
- Approx. shipping weight: 247 lbs.



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CAST IRON WHEELS

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SALE \$445⁰⁰

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Lower 48 states

30TH ANNIVERSARY 17" HEAVY-DUTY BANDSAW

- Motor: 2 HP, 110V/220V, single-phase, TEFC
- Amps: 20A at 110V, 10A at 220V
- RPM: 1725
- Precision-ground cast iron table size: 17" x 17" x 1 1/2" thick
- Table tilt: 10° left, 45° right
- Floor to table height: 37 1/2"
- Cutting capacity/throat: 16 1/4" left
- Maximum cutting height: 12 1/3"
- Blade size: 131 1/2" long
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3 HP DUST COLLECTOR

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- Cutterhead diameter: 2 1/2"
- Cutterhead knives: 3
- Cutterhead speed: 4800 RPM
- Approx. shipping weight: 260 lbs.



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G0452P ~~\$525⁰⁰~~ **SALE \$495⁰⁰**

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1 1/2 HP SHAPER

- Motor: 1 1/2 HP, 120V/240V, single-phase
- Precision-ground cast iron table size: 20 1/4" x 18"
- Spindle travel: 3"
- 2 interchangeable spindles: 1/2" & 3/4"
- Spindle speeds: 7000 & 10,000 RPM
- Max. cutter dia.: 5"
- Approx. shipping weight: 246 lbs.



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G1035P **ONLY \$560⁰⁰**

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8" x 76" JOINTERS

- Motor: 3 HP, 240V, single-phase, TEFC, 3450 RPM
- Maximum depth of cut: 1/3"
- Maximum rabbeting capacity: 1/2"
- Total table size: 8" x 76 3/8"
- Cutterhead diameter: 3 3/16" (G0490), 3 3/8" (G0490X)
- Cutterhead speed: 4800 RPM
- Approximate shipping weight: 560 lbs.

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15" PLANERS with Built-in Mobile Base

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- Precision-ground cast iron table size: 15" x 20"
- Max. cutting depth: 1/3"
- Feed rate: 16 & 30 FPM
- Cutterhead speed: 4800 RPM
- Approx. shipping weight: 672 lbs.



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G0453Z ~~\$1695⁰⁰~~ **SALE \$1595⁰⁰**

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10" HEAVY-DUTY CABINET TABLE SAW with Riving Knife

- Motor: 5 HP, 220V/440V*, 12A/6A, 3-phase
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- Arbor: 3/8" • Arbor speed: 4000 RPM • Max. dado width: 3/4" • Capacity @ 90°: 3 3/16", @ 45°: 2 3/16"
- Max. rip capacity: 52"
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CAST IRON TRUNNIONS

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24" WIDE-BELT SANDER

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- Table elevation motor: 1/4 HP
- Sanding belt: 25" x 60"
- Drum speed: 2565 FPM
- Conveyor speed: Variable, 15-49 FPM
- Maximum board dimensions: 24" W x 6" H
- Minimum board dimensions: 14" L x 1/8" H
- Approximate shipping weight: 1573 lbs.



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CURRENT EVENTS

with JOHN ENGLISH

Can you keep pace with changing health care laws?

Here's a primer that will help woodworkers decide if the Obamacare exchanges are good or bad for their businesses

Here's an understatement: the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) is confusing. And because it has been so deeply politicized, it's difficult to decide whether the "news" that we're hearing is slanted one way or the other. Whether you love it or hate it, the bottom line is that it very much looks like it's here to stay.

After a very rocky start, the website for signing up is making progress, but still has a long way to go. New revelations also indicate that a small number of people will not be able to hold onto their current insurance plans and that some folks with expensive policies will actually end up paying more.

One big recent concern was that, because the website (healthcare.gov) is so awful, it might be susceptible to hacking and identity theft. According to CNNMoney.com, in a report published on Nov. 5, that actually isn't an issue. That's because one doesn't give a whole lot of information to the government site (just addresses, birth dates and phone numbers): the personal data is actually given to individual insurance companies who have secure networks.

That points out another misconception: the Affordable Care Act doesn't turn the government into an insurance company or a healthcare provider. What the law does do is attempt to regulate how insurance companies treat their customers, to level the playing field. From one-man shops to woodshops employing hundreds of workers, that involvement by Uncle Sam is going to impact how the woodworking industry buys health insurance.

Under Obamacare, the latest word is that "almost" everyone who already has health insurance will be able to stay with the plan

they have, if they so choose. The president initially said that everybody would be able to retain their plan, but now the White House has changed that message because there are apparently a number of policies that don't meet the new federal guidelines.

One thing that hasn't changed is that parents can still keep dependent children on their plans until the kids are 26, which should get most of them through college.

The biggest impact of the law will be on that huge portion of middle-class America that doesn't currently have health insurance (an estimated 30 million) because they can't afford it. And of those who do have a policy, a large percentage currently have to settle for poor coverage.

My wife and I, for example, are in our mid-50s and self-employed. We live in rural South Dakota, so we have very few choices because most companies don't cover places with low population density. Our deductible is about the price of a brand-new, entry-level automobile with rollup windows and no CD player. On top of stiff monthly premiums, we pay for everything except a major catastrophe.

Under Obamacare, people who don't have coverage — or have awful policies like ours — can enroll in the federal health insurance marketplace (that infamous website). This allows one-man shops or small-shop employees who don't have a company plan to enroll in one that covers essential benefits and pre-existing conditions. When it's finally working, you'll be able to click on a button and select your state.

You can also call 800-318-2596, 24 hours a day, seven days a week and apply over the phone. Or you can apply with a paper application (just download the form — that part of the website works) or in person with an assister (to find one, go to localhelp.

healthcare.gov).

Open enrollment in the federal health insurance marketplace started Oct. 1 and, as of the first week of November, is supposed to run until March 31, 2014. My guess is they'll extend that. The concept was to have a one-stop store where people could fill out one application and then learn if they can get lower costs based on income or compare all of their coverage options side-by-side and then enroll in the plan they choose. It was designed to eliminate the overwhelming challenge of contacting every company that offers insurance in a geographical area and make it easier for us to find policies.

WHY MOST REPUBLICANS OPPOSE IT

Health insurance, by its nature, is designed to spread the cost of providing health care across the widest population, so that healthy people can help pay the bills for sick people. We all get sick and well over time, so the concept is a good theory. It works well in the auto insurance field, where good drivers all across America subsidize my youngest son.

So, Obamacare took that model, where all drivers are required by law to have auto insurance before they start their vehicle, and applied it to the health care industry. All of us at some time require medical attention. By spreading the risk across 300-plus million people, we should be able to reduce the costs for everyone, right? Well, it's not that simple. We have an aging population, so there are more people at the old end of the scale than the young end, and us old folks are the ones who tend to have the most expensive illnesses, except for pregnancy/childbirth.

The law says that people who don't obtain coverage must pay a per-month fine on their federal income tax return for every month they are without health insurance. In 2014, that fine is \$95 per adult and \$47.50 per child, or 1 percent of income, whichever is higher. The family max is \$285. People who make less will be asked to pay less. A woodworker making less than \$45,960 as an individual or \$94,200 as a family of four might be eligible for tax credits through the federal exchange that would reduce his/her monthly premium.

Many Republicans think this smacks of socialism, which Webster defines as "a way of organizing a society in which major industries are owned and controlled by the government rather than by individual people and companies."

The government doesn't own the health care industry and it obviously doesn't control it either. What it is seeking to do is regulate it as it does in lots of other industries like banking and the stock market. But Obamacare does mandate universal participation: that is,

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Fred Wholley, one of KCD Software's Team of CNC Software Experts

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Above: Phil Harron of Kitchen Creations in Yarmouth, MA uses Cabinet/Closet Commander to design kitchens, price jobs, auto-nest parts and go directly to their CNC router.

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Current Events

we all have to be part of it. That limits free choice, an essential element of free markets and a cornerstone of American philosophy. People who object to the law point out that there is no law saying we have to buy stocks or open a checking account or even drive a car. They have a point.

Unfortunately, we all do need health care. And, as with other essentials such as food, it needs to be regulated. How much is the question.

THE IMPACT ON SELF-EMPLOYED WOODWORKERS

First of all, there is no law saying that self-employed or uninsured woodworkers have to buy health insurance through the new exchanges. We are absolutely free to stay with our local agent, if we already have one. However, it does seem like it would be worthwhile to use the exchanges to check how much premiums will be with other companies. And we can also use it to see if we qualify for tax credits that might reduce our monthly premiums. If you're a younger woodworker with kids, you probably qualify.

Perhaps the biggest thing this law does is to eliminate the ability of insurance companies to deny or restrict insurance for

people who have pre-existing conditions.

And here's another critical change: you can no longer be dropped from coverage when you are sick. In addition, companies can't place lifetime or even annual limits on your coverage. And preventative tests and treatments must now be included at no additional out-of-pocket cost.

Keep in mind that Medicare is not a part of the new law. If you already have Medicare, you just hang onto it. Both Medicare and CHIP (the Children's Health Insurance Program, which provides free or low-cost health coverage for more than 7 million kids up to age 19) will be expanded to provide insurance for up to 16 million more Americans who simply can't afford private healthcare premiums. If you fill out an application on the federal exchange, it will tell you if you or your family qualifies for these programs.

If you're a woodworker who can get health insurance through your employer, then you can only receive exchange tax credits (the ones that reduce monthly premiums) if the boss covers less than 60 percent of the premium cost or doesn't provide quality insurance or provides insurance that will cost you more than 9.5 percent of your family's income.

THE IMPACT ON BIGGER SHOPS

Shops with more than 50 employees will be required to provide health coverage to all of their workers by 2015 and employers who don't comply will have to pay a per-employee fee. That sounds harsh, but the reality is that almost all big woodshops already take care of their people. Forbes magazine thinks that, in an effort to circumvent this requirement, many companies will divide their employees into divisions that will stand alone and each will have fewer than 50 employees.

Small businesses with fewer than 50 full-time employees can use the exchanges (specifically, a section of the website called SHOP, or "small business health options program") to purchase group health plans for their employees.

Woodshops with fewer than 25 full-time employees can use the exchanges to get subsidized insurance for their crew. Enrollment in most of the small-business SHOP exchanges (that were scheduled to open Oct. 1) weren't able to enroll online until November. As coverage doesn't start until January, that shouldn't be too much of a problem. Earlier, the government had said that it would delay implementing a SHOP feature providing employees more flexibility to choose their health plans until 2015.

Stay tuned ... 

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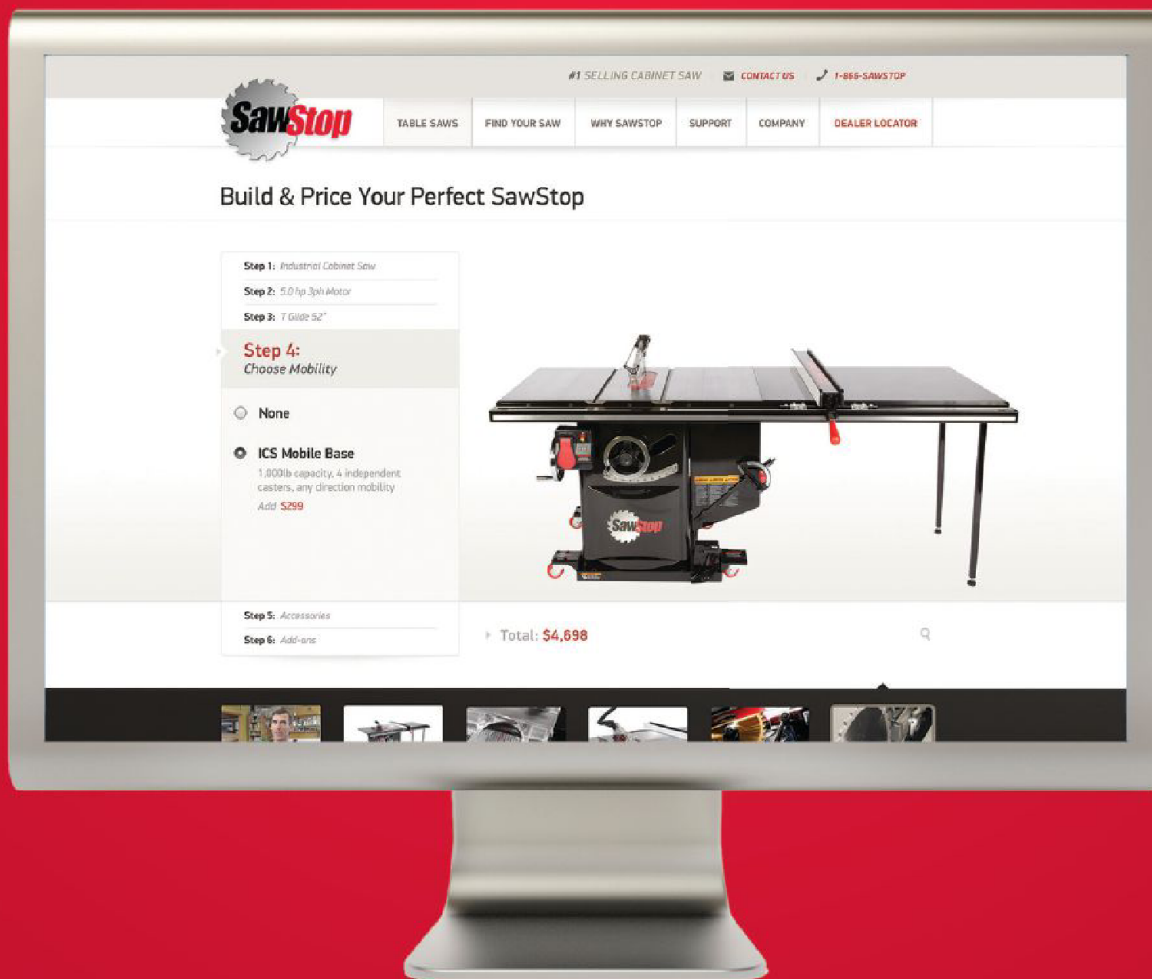
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NEWS DESK

New home for Boston's furniture school

North Bennet Street School expands to single facility that will house all
programs in one location



By Jennifer Hicks

The North Bennet Street School, a launching pad for some of the finest trained furniture makers out of New England, recently moved and expanded to a new facility in the North End of Boston. The move allows the school to combine all of its classes into one building.

Established in 1885, the school offers intensive, hands-on training in traditional trades and fine craftsmanship. It has full-time programs and workshops in bookbinding, cabinet and furniture making, carpentry, jewelry making and repair, locksmithing, piano technology, preservation carpentry and violin making and repair.

For the first time in decades, the school now has space for the entire school to gather, enhancing the educational experience for students and strengthening the sense of community.

"For the woodworking programs, the most significant thing this new facility does is bring all programs back together in one building. Since 2006, our carpentry and carpentry preservation programs have been at a satellite facility in Arlington, Mass., while our furniture mak-

ing programs have been at our former facility in the North End. Now we have eight full programs, including four that work with wood, in one building. The collaboration is significant for providing a richer student experience," says Nancy Jenner, the school's director of communications.

The 65,000-sq.-ft. facility opened in September. The school's recently completed capital campaign raised more than \$17 million to purchase and renovate the new building.

"The success of this project was the result of the coordinated efforts of a large team of specialists working together and each counting on others to fill in critical parts of the puzzle. We now have a larger school where we can run public workshops in addition to our full-time programs. The whole building creates an added sense of community for students and staff," school president Miguel Gomez-Ibanez says.

North Bennet's former home, traded to the city as part of the purchase agreement, will be used to expand Boston's public John Eliot School.

Contact: North Bennet Street School, 150 North St., Boston, MA 02109. Tel: 617-227-0155.
www.nbss.edu



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Kitchen & Bath Industry Show teams with builders' event

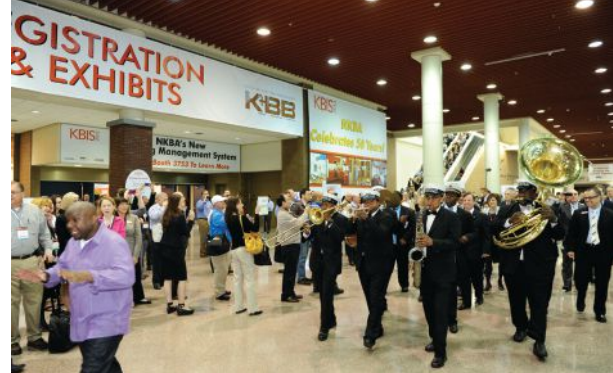
By Jennifer Hicks

For the first time, the 2014 Kitchen & Bath Industry Show, scheduled for Feb. 4-6 at the Las Vegas Convention Center, will run concurrently with the International Builders Show. Both shows are expected to draw 75,000 attendees and 2,000 exhibitors from across the U.S. and Canada.

"We have a phenomenal new approach with two great shows under one roof. Attendees are

going to be able to come take advantage of both shows for the price of one," says National Kitchen & Bath Association president John Petrie.

Sponsored by the National Kitchen and Bath Association, KBIS will feature more than 100 professional development presentations, including "Voices from the Industry" sessions that will cover design, customer service, business management and sales and marketing topics.



Emphasizing professional development and career advancement, NKBA will offer 100 different programs during the annual KBIS show in February. New NKBA president John Petrie is looking forward to the turnout.

A highlight for Petrie is the return of the show's "30 Under 30" program.

"The program takes 30 of the industry's emerging youths and brings them to the show, where they are able then to interact with exhibitors. It really is an exciting program. We're happy to say we're bringing that back.

"We're also excited about the estimated number of exhibitors. I think we're going to see lots of new product launches, lots of new innovative ideas that will really push some design trends that the attendees are excited about seeing. It's one of the reasons why I've gone for 27 years, which is to see what the new products are and be able to bring back to my own marketplace to benefit my customers."

With the economy continuing to improve, Petrie expects the show floor to be a beehive of activity. For information, visit www.kbis.com.

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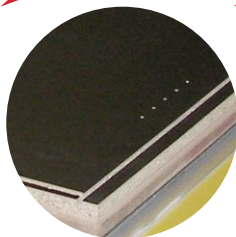
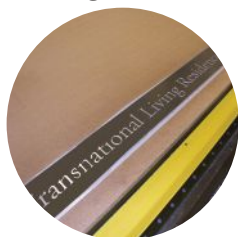
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Woodworking teacher gains grant for Rockler CNC

By Jennifer Hicks

Justin Herrling, a woodworking technology teacher at Auburn High School in Auburn, N.Y., purchased a Rockler CNC Shark Pro Plus HD using a grant from the Auburn Education Foundation at the beginning of this year. Herrling says he wanted to enhance the classroom experience for his students and, based on the feedback he's received from students throughout the year, his efforts have paid off greatly.

"I've been teaching there for 10 years and got to thinking about getting a CNC. I thought it would be real neat for the kids and just tried for the grant. We do a carving project by hand every year which is extremely time-consuming and I thought it would be neat to show them how to do it with a computer-controlled machine. Luckily, my application got approved," says Herrling.

Because of his limited budget to purchase new equipment, he wrote a grant application to the foundation last fall. The non-

profit organization reviews grants twice a year to exclusively support Auburn and surrounding city school districts through its own fundraising.

Annette Abdelaziz, the foundation's executive director, says teachers are encouraged to request what they need and state why they need the additional resources. She said the grant board felt Herrling put together an excellent proposal with pictures showing how the machine would work in the classroom.

"Justin does a good job meshing older technologies with modern technologies. With this piece of equipment they can design something on computer or from their imagination and, from what I understand they can use wood or synthetic materials, so they can use this tool to etch onto plastic, Corian or other materials. So we thought it was an outstanding use of our resources to fund that program for them," says Abdelaziz.

After initially setting up the machine, he



Justin Herrling shows his students how to work with the Rockler CNC machine he paid for with a local grant.

programed it to use V-Carve Pro software to communicate with the CNC panel control. This allows students to see exactly what the project will look like once it is complete.

"This machine has proven to be both very exciting and educational for the students and myself. Although we have just broken the surface on what it is capable of, we have produced some outstanding projects that we could otherwise be unable to create," says Herrling.

Contact: Auburn Education Foundation, P.O. Box 592, Auburn, NY 13021. Tel: 315-255-8827. www.auburneducationfoundation.org

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FINISHING

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Lacquer costs now can mean profits later

Combined with today's high-efficiency spray guns, modern formulas allow for fewer coats and savings on labor and materials

It's too expensive.

I heard this quite a bit when I was selling lacquer in various parts of the country. The price per gallon was the first thing many customers would ask about, probably assuming that all lacquers were the same except for price.

Many of these customers eventually came to the conclusion that the value of the product was what they were really after and that only after that had been determined could cost per gallon be considered as a factor.

I also heard "I've been doing this for 20 years and haven't had a complaint yet." Given the progress that has been made in finishing equipment, tools and materials in any 20-year period since the 1940s, I believe the finisher who made that statement missed many opportunities to improve his bottom line.

Factors affecting the bottom line for a finishing business include the cost of the facility and the utilities to run it, the tools and equipment for performing the operations, administration, transportation, labor and materials consumed. The finishing materials (sandpaper, steel wool, other abrasives, glue, stains, colorants, sealers, solvents, additives, topcoats, touch-up materials, rags, masking tape, paper) represent a relatively small portion of those costs. Labor is generally a major component.

Here are some things to consider:

In 1975, I could buy a quality lacquer containing 25 percent volume solids. Remember, the solids content determines how much of a gallon of lacquer remains on the surface of your workpiece if you were able to apply it at 100 percent efficiency.

Let's say my specification for a particular job, a triple dresser, is 2 dry mils thickness for the top, case and drawers. I'm using a high-quality conventional spray gun of the time, a Binks No. 7.

In order to spray the lacquer so that it flowed as desired, I had to reduce it by 50 percent with lacquer thinner, so I was spraying at 12.5 percent. Applying this at a wet film thickness of 3 mils will give me about .375 mils of dry film. Achieving my target of 2 mils will require more than five coats. If I do any significant sanding between coats, the total film build will be reduced, so I might need six or more coats to allow for the reduction.

If I used a gallon of lacquer at \$30 (this example uses approximate 2013 prices for comparison purposes), half gallon of sealer (\$15), half gallon of reducer (\$10), quart of dye stain (\$17), pint of pigmented wiping stain (\$9), half pint of glaze (\$4) and assorted shop supplies (\$15), I'm out \$100. Plus, it would take about 5-1/2 hours to complete the job.

FOUR DECADES LATER

Today, I'm using an HVLP or air-assisted airless application system for greater transfer efficiency and a modern precatalyzed lacquer at 25 percent volume solids. Since the material is supplied as ready to use or ready to spray, no reduction is needed if I spray at the specified temperature and my gun is properly set up for that coating. Even with the old gun, just the upgrade in lacquer allows me to apply the same wet film thickness (3 mils) resulting in .75 mils dry per coat. Now only 2.66 coats are required to achieve 2 dry mils.

Three coats instead of six will allow for sanding between coats. I've only used a half-gallon of lacquer and no reducer. I've saved 45 minutes in setup, cleanup and application time and, if I am sanding between coats, another 30 minutes. There are other incremental savings on tack cloth, sandpaper, energy for air movement and electricity for the compressor, etc.

I can expect 40 percent transfer efficiency from a conventional gun, 65 percent from a HVLP and 80 percent from an air-assisted

airless. These percentages assume ideal conditions since transfer efficiency is also affected by the shape of the parts and the finisher's training and skill. But the point is that simply moving from conventional to air-assisted airless would cut my material usage for lacquer and sealer in half.

Many of today's coatings can be applied to a greater film thickness per coat than lacquers of the past, so further reduction in the number of coats can be realized. In the example, I used 3 mils for the film thickness that was typical for lacquers in the 1970s. Today I would spray the precoat at 5 mils for the horizontal surfaces. Many self-taught spray operators have a tendency to apply very thin coats to avoid runs or curtaining. Developing the ability to spray a full wet coat confidently is crucial to efficient application.

READ THE LITERATURE

Manufacturers have recommendations concerning the optimum build to offer the protection expected. Too much film build can result in a brittle finish, prone to crazing or wrinkling. The product data sheet or tech sheet will show the target viscosity, generally at 77 degrees. Measuring and recording the viscosity and temperature of your coating will help ensure that you are spraying within the parameters established by the manufacturer. Spraying the material too cold will result in poor atomization and flow out. Correcting that with reducer or retarder makes the material more susceptible to runs and curtaining and reduces the solids content.

Use a wet mil gauge to measure wet film thickness. You might be surprised at how much or how little you are applying in each coat. You can calculate the dry mil thickness by multiplying the wet mil thickness by the percent of volume solids (4 wet mils x 25 percent volume solids = 1 dry mil). Adjust your spray technique or the fluid pressure/tip size to achieve the desired wet millage.

The sheet might suggest tip and needle sizes, as well as air and fluid pressures. Use them as a starting point. It's a better approach than adjusting the coating to your application system. And it's advisable to purchase coatings as a system, using all components from the same manufacturer to ensure compatibility.

In the end, the price per gallon is not the metric you need to use, but the cost of the film deposited on the work or the cost of the applied solids. Often a higher cost per gallon, for the right material, can contribute to a lower-cost finished product. [W](#)

Greg Williams, formerly senior touchup and finishing instructor for Mohawk Finishing Products, is now a freelance instructor and consultant for finishing and touchup. He can be reached at gregalwil@yahoo.com.

AMANA TOOL OFFERS NEW BIT SET FOR CNC CARVING

The new solid carbide 2-D/3-D carving tapered ball nose router bit set from Amana Tool contains three zirconium nitride-coated bits ideal for precision small- and large-scale carving applications, according to the company.

Constructed of special-grade solid carbide, each of the ball nose router bits lasts longer than traditional router bits and delivers superior cutting performance in materials including plastics, solid surface, aluminum, brass, bronze, copper, sign foam and board, wood composite and natural wood, the company said in a release.

The set includes a 1/16", 1/8" and 1/4" diameter bits. Applications include signage and 3-D millwork, as well as 2-D and 3-D precision large-scale carving, contouring, profiling modeling and pattern making. The set is specially designed for 2-D and 3-D CNC profiling and carving with machines such as iCarver, CNC Shark, ShopBot, Datron, CarveWright and CompuCarve woodworking systems, among others.

For information, visit www.amanatool.com.

AXYZ ADDS ONLINE PARTS ORDERING

In response to its customers' need for around the clock access to their products, AXYZ International recently expanded its online services for its CNC RouterShop division.

Instead of having to call their local AXYZ office for part numbers and prices, customers can go to AXYZ's site to order what they need. Available spare parts range from controller parts to fuses, belts and bearings. Customers can also purchase replacement spindles, vacuum pumps and controllers online, according to the company.

"We recognize that customers need access to parts twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and we're happy to be able to help them keep their operations running smoothly, with minimal downtime," AXYZ vice president of market development Robert Marshall said in a statement.

AXYZ has also enhanced its online software product training courses and technical information downloads.

For information, visit www.cncroutershop.com.

AKZONOBEL OPENS NORTH CAROLINA STUDIO TO ALL

AkzoNobel opened its International Wood Finishes Color Styling Studio in High Point, N.C., to designers and manufacturers all over the world who need to take their vision from sketch to showroom.

"Before our studio primarily serviced the Asian export furniture market, but then we found that our unique and comprehensive services were highly desirable to customers in other regions and market segments as well," studio director Keith Estes said in a statement.

The studio, supported by a network of regional studios and technicians in Europe and Asia, features color and finish system experts.

"Our customers rely on our ability to create a finishing system that can be replicated in their manufacturing operations – sometimes across multiple plants, with varying application equipment and production parameters," said Estes. "The color, sheen and quality have to be perfect on every batch, and that takes a team with a unique skill set that starts here in High Point."

For information, visit www.akzonobel.com/wood.

ROCKLER WILL OPEN SECOND 'SUPERSTORE' IN SEATTLE

Rockler Woodworking and Hardware is scheduled to open a nearly 9,000-sq.-ft. retail store in Seattle in December.

The Seattle store will be modeled after Rockler's flagship store in Maplewood, Minn., which features more than 11,000-sq.-ft. of retail space and a glass-enclosed demonstration area.

"Our new, customer-focused facilities are Rockler's largest and most ambitious stores yet," Rockler Woodworking and Hardware president and CEO Ann Rockler Jackson said in a statement. "They give customers even more product choices, personalized service and rewarding educational experiences."

"With both of these new flagship stores, we'll be able to better reach out and help every level of customer, from the expert woodworker to the new DIYer."

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Air-powered tools can have you breathing easily

Pneumatics have many advantages, including less noise and more versatility in the shop

“What an airhead!” That’s the way one professional furniture builder described another recently during a shop tour. The shop owner does a lot of bending and laminating and has upgraded much of his equipment (especially clamps and jigs) to pneumatics, so he was showing off his new setup. Fortunately, these two are good friends and the comment was taken in a spirit of jest. But joking aside, the question remains: is becoming an airhead the smarter path for a woodworker?

Among the reasons that woodshops use compressed air to run tools are weight, maintenance and noise. Take, for example, a palm sander. Because there is no motor, a pneumatic sander can actually weigh less than an electric one. True, a few ounces won’t matter — unless you’re running it several hours a day or maybe above your head.

Because there’s no motor, air tools seem to last forever. If there are no moving parts under the hood, then there’s nothing to break.

And sound is definitely an issue. One of the biggest advantages to air tools is that the annoying, high-pitched whine of a universal motor is gone, replaced by a sonorous, soothing tone that saves both ears and nerves. Well, it’s soothing as long as the compressor is located in another room behind soundproof doors.

FIND A GOOD MATCH

Pneumatic sanders are generally less expensive up front than good quality electric ones, but a woodworker needs to factor in the cost of a large stationary compressor in the equation because a sander will use a lot more air than a small, portable compressor can provide. You should check the manuals on both the tool and

the compressor before marrying them together.

You’re looking for CFMs (the volume of air) at specific PSI (air pressure) and need to compare apples to apples. If your compressor delivers high volume at low pressure and the tool uses high volume at high pressure, you have a problem. If you’re having a tough time understanding the info on the labels, it’s a good idea to visit the website of a knowledgeable pneumatic tool dealer such as Grainger or Burns Tools, or ask a compressor manufacturer such as Rolair, and they can generally help you match a tool to the power source.

One disadvantage of pneumatic tools is that they are not cordless and sometimes a neophyte (or even an overconfident old hand) can allow that heavy airhose to tip the sander and dig a half-moon-shaped hole in a veneered panel. The solution is to suspend the air supply lines above the work, rather than allowing them to run across the floor.

When it comes to delivering power, there’s room for argument, too. Some air-powered sanders have a lot of torque, while electric ones usually have more options when it comes to varying speed and orbital patterns. Dust collection can be a problem with traditional pneumatic sanders as there’s really no way to hook a vacuum line to them. However, Festool has come to the rescue with its LEX sanders that include a 3-in-1 hose design (festoolusa.com). It supplies air, extracts dust and provides an exhaust (the air has to go somewhere) and does it all through one hose.

A SHOP STAPLE

Beyond sanders, compressed air is the power source of choice for mechanics’ tools that woodworkers occasionally use, such as impact and ratchet wrenches. Air couplings allow for very quick switches from one tool to the

next and having a couple of wrenches set up ahead of time with the right sized sockets for assembling, say, knock-down furniture or table leg hardware, can make a job go very fast.

Any shop that is building casework already knows how valuable air nailers and staplers are in assembly. Nails are not great intra-fiber friction fasteners in themselves, but they will generally hold a joint together until the glue cures. And staples, because they spread the pressure, have a lot of holding power, especially in fractious materials like MDF.

When I called around, several pneumatic tool manufacturers mentioned that air tools offer a much better power-to-weight ratio than electric tools, so we retired to the shop and did a little weighing. That statement seems to be true of some, but not all, tools. For example, our air-powered routers were lighter than their electric cousins, but the electric pin nailer weighed less than the pneumatic one. Air tools are often touted as having more torque and higher revolutions per minute, too.

Pneumatic tools tend to take up less space on the bench, because they don’t have power cords attached to them or banks of battery chargers plugged into the wall. However, air hoses can cost the tools that advantage if they’re not properly managed and routed.

In general, air tools appear to be safer than electric ones (although today’s power tools are incredibly safe). Trigger releases (such as the pressure locks on pneumatic nailers that stop the guns firing unless the release is engaged) do seem to be more universal in the pneumatic world. The delivery system is safer, too: an installer using a pneumatic tool while he inadvertently stands in water won’t become a conduit to ground as he might if an electric power cord shorts. This is a very real consideration in situations from bathrooms to boat repair.

IN AND OUT OF THE SHOP

Where air tools shine, of course, is in the finishing process. Pneumatic HVLP spray systems deliver an even, predictable flow of finish without noise or heat or dust issues.

For installers, the prospect of replacing grinders, chisels and impact hammers with air-powered versions is an attractive one because the air-based versions are often more robust. The potential downside here is that the on-site compressor needs to be quite large, so a truck-based or even a trailer unit might be worth a look, depending on the size of your install crew. When smaller compressors need to recharge or cool down, they can hold up the job because there’s no compressed air to run the tools.

There are some cordless nailers out there, but they aren’t pneumatic tools. They use a gas cylinder and a battery-based ignition system and, while they look a lot like a standard pneumatic

nail gun, they're very different animals. We framed a house in Wyoming with them a couple of years ago, where the lot was a little above 6,000 feet altitude and they became quite temperamental, especially when the weather turned cold. But for most framing and finishing jobs, they are a very viable and inexpensive option when one considers that there's no need to buy a compressor or a generator. In the woodshop (as opposed to being out on an install), they don't make as much sense: less complicated standard guns running off a compressor will be less likely to fail and cheaper to run.

Electric motors are cooled by ambient air and they have to work harder in extreme conditions, especially heat. The single, large electric motor that drives a compressor is a lot more rugged, durable and longer-lasting than the dozens of small motors it can replace in drills, sanders, routers and so on. And those small motors do fail: we've all had electric drills die on the job, usually when we are miles from the nearest hardware store or when there are only two more screws to drive in the last hinge before we can deliver the entertainment center.

A FEW TIPS

If you do add pneumatic options to your woodshop, the compressor manufacturers have a few words of advice for you. Keep the air supply lines filtered for both foreign bodies (dust) and moisture. Look into backflow prevention (small valves that only allow the air to flow in one direction) and use separate lines for the tools that need inline lubrication and those that are sealed and don't need oiling.

Turn off and unplug the compressor at night and when the shop won't be used for several days. A master switch can be installed by an electrician and located right at the compressor to make this easier. If there's a leak in the hoses, pipes, filters, oilers or any other part of the delivery system, the compressor can cycle continuously trying to meet the perceived demand for compressed air. In some cases, the pump and/or motor can overheat and start a shop fire. It's also a good idea, based on that, to maintain a zone around the compressor that is completely free of flammable material such as wood, packaging and especially finishing supplies. **W**

LAGUNA SCHEDULES FREE CNC WORKSHOP

Laguna Tools will present a free CNC educational workshop and open house Dec. 13-14 in Irvine, Calif.

The workshop will feature demonstrations and seminars, while showcasing the business advantages of upgrading to a nested-based manufacturing system using Laguna Tools CNC technology and Mozaik Software.

"The workshop will demonstrate how Laguna Tool's CNC technology, along with highly specialized Mozaik Software, will help them to reduce shop space, boost production, cut waste, lower overhead costs, increase overall efficiencies and enhance profits. With so much interest in CNC technology and software, we felt the timing was right to schedule comprehensive educational workshop focused on both," Laguna Tools vice president Catherine Helshoj said in a statement.

For information, visit www.lagunatools.com.

WCA AND WOODLINKS USA FINALIZE MERGER

WoodLINKS USA and The Woodwork Career Alliance of North America announced that each group's board of directors approved combining the two organizations.

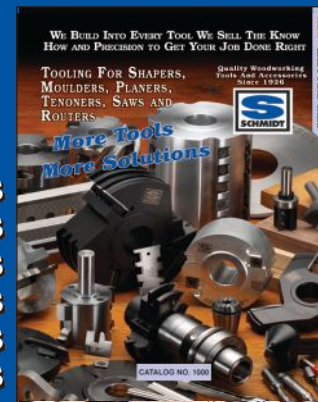
The two wood industry educational organizations announced in February they were studying a merger.

The merger allows WoodLINKS USA members to become education members of WCA. The WCA has developed industry-recognized skill standards and a certification system for the wood industry. This agreement also furthers the partnership created in 2010 between the two organizations.

Under the merger, all current school members of WoodLINKS USA will become Education Members of the merged organization and will be provided with the same benefits afforded them under their membership terms with WoodLINKS USA. The Education Membership is also open to new schools for a \$250 annual fee.

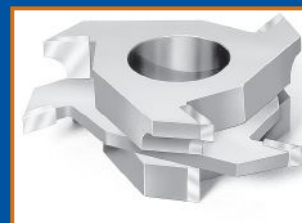
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TOOLS & TECHNIQUES

Festool unveils Carvex jigsaw with cordless option

By Jennifer Hicks



Festool introduced the Carvex jigsaw in September and has since added a cordless version, both of which feature brushless motors, multiple base plates and a long list of user controls.

Where to begin? Well, with brushless motors, which easily qualify as today's hottest trend in the portable tool marketplace.

"Brushless motor technology offers us longer run times, particularly on cordless products," product manager Rick Bush says. "This motor is lighter in weight, more energy efficient and longer lasting so it doesn't have the same service issues associated with it as a motor with brushes would."

Then there's the tool-free base changing system with seven task-specific bases.

The angle base has two beveling feet that provide greater stability and accuracy when making inside or outside angle cuts. A steel base plate is available for metal-cutting applications. A guide rail adapter base can be used with Festool guide rails and also serves as the base for attaching the circle and radius cutting accessory. Then there's the hook-and-loop base plate with replaceable felts to prevent scratches on delicate materials. A dimpled base plate is available for uneven surfaces. And there's also a hard fiber base plate that provides a smooth, low-friction surface.

Bush points out the saw's carbide guides. "They stabilize the blade and give you a square and true cut."

"Our splinter guard is also pretty unique because you actually cut into it with the blade of the machine so you hit a true zero clearance. That helps to prevent any kind of tear-out on sheet goods."

The rest of the list includes four LED work lights, tool-free blade chuck, adjustable chip guard, variable speed trigger, stroke adjustment knob, and dust extraction features.

The corded version sells for \$350 as a stand-alone tool. The cordless jigsaw, with batteries and a charger, sells for \$550. Both models are available with a barrel or D-handle grip, and accessories abound.

Contact: Festool USA. Tel: 888-377-8600. www.festoolusa.com

Rockler debuts electronic router fence

By Jennifer Hicks

Rockler always has something new and its latest offering is the Ready-2Rout, an electronic router fence. The product consists of a controller box featuring a touch-screen interface attached to an aluminum multitrack router fence. The fence automatically adjusts according to the numerical input from the user and comes loaded with apps for producing box joints, dados and half-blind dovetails.

Rockler vice president of marketing Scott Ekman says the electronic adjustment eliminates the imperfect and tedious nature of adjusting the fence by hand. It also allows users to repeat cuts indefinitely on their router table by recalling stored positioning data from the hard drive.

"This is a revolution for the router table. Router fence setups and common joinery applications now take seconds instead of minutes and settings can be saved and stored in the unit itself, which makes repeatability a joy instead of a hassle. Users can avoid the task of tediously adjusting the router fence by hand, and use the time saved to be more productive in the shop," Ekman says.

The fence also features a USB port for loading software updates and additional apps.

The Ready2Rout retails for \$599.99.

Contact: Rockler Woodworking and Hardware. Tel: 877-762-5537. www.rockler.com 



Anest Iwata adds new Supernova spray gun

By Jennifer Hicks

Anest Iwata brought its latest Supernova series gravity-style spray gun to market in October. The new Entech LS400 represents the latest addition to the company's lineup of spray guns for professional users, offering a wide range of application solutions for waterborne basecoats.

"This is an entirely new product featuring HVLP technology and pre-atomization technology coupled together give to users a very high comfort of application, a stable and large fan pattern, high stability in droplet sizes and maximum material savings," says product manager Mark Hebbeler.

"This product is perfect for a small shop trying to maximize profits. How this gun atomizes paint actually saves money. The transfer efficiency on it is so high that it translates into material savings, which also translates into waste, having to change booth filters, compressor wear and tear and saving on man hours and productions."

The gun also sprays in an even and oriented fashion, says Hebbeler. "When you spray the gun and you look at the droplets from top to bottom on your material they're all equal, which translates into a more even and better finish."

The Entech LS400 gun retails for \$760. Aluminum cups are sold separately.

Contact: Anest Iwata USA. Tel: 513-755-3100. www.anestiwata.com 

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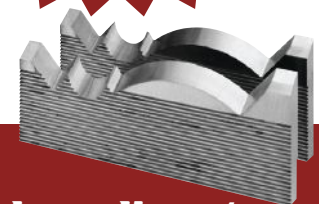


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Rikon band saw adds space and support

By Jennifer Hicks

Rikon Power Tools recently introduced its new 14" open-stand band saw, model 10-321. Equipped with a 15-3/4" x 20-3/8" cast-iron table, the saw is designed to provide woodworkers with optimal space and work support. It also features an 8" resawing capacity and a 13-5/8" throat, which will allow the user to cut thicker material on a compact saw, the company says.

"This is one of the largest tables featured on a 14" band saw in a similar price range. It provides a large work surface and steadier support for the product going through the cut. The table also has dual standard T-style miter slots and we provide a T-slot on the left side of the blade for customers that want to make their own fences or jigs or put sleds on and utilize both miter slots," Rikon vice president of technical support Rod Burrow says.

Upper and lower ball-bearing blade guides and thrust bearings reduce friction, increase

blade life and contribute to smooth operation. A rack-and-pinion guide post allows users to adjust the cutting depth easily with the turn of a knob. The table tilts 46 degrees to the right and 10 degrees to the left, according to the company.

"It's a two-speed machine like most of the band saws in the Rikon line, so you can use the higher speed for all wood-cutting applications and slow it down to cut non-ferrous metal, plastics, composites, or anything of that nature because we realize woodworkers incorporate more into our work than just wood and this gives them the opportunity to expand their product offerings a little bit," says Burrow.

The 1-hp saw also features two dust ports — a 2-1/2" port under the table and a 4" port — cast-aluminum wheels and a powder coat finish.

The band saw sells for about \$600. Optional accessories include a mobility kit, fence and miter gauge. **W**

Contact: Rikon Power Tools. Tel: 877-884-5167. www.rikontools.com



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Alder climbs the ladder in popularity

Rich color and changes in design trends have availability and prices both increasing in some regions

By Jennifer Hicks

Whether their clients want a knotty or clear variation, alder has been a popular material choice for cabinetmakers lately.

Lumber suppliers interviewed by Woodshop News agree that the West Coast species has gained popularity during the last year. Some say it's the price, while others believe its rich color hues make it a hot seller.

Art Blumenkron, owner of Goby Walnut Products in Portland, Ore., has seen a definite increase in sales.

"Alder is not a big item for us — we sell way more walnut and white oak — but in general sales are up quite a bit for us. I think there is a design trend leaning towards it and we sell almost exclusively into the upper end of the market and it seems to be doing pretty well," Blumenkron says.

"Many people like knotty alder for cabinetry. Structurally it's not as hard as maple, per se. It's got a little bit of an orangey tone. So people do use it with just a clear finish, but people also use it for paint grade. It's easy to work, easy to

dry. It's pretty light."

Red alder (*Alnus rubra*) typically grows in the northwest regions of Oregon and Washington and up into some parts of Canada. It is found in large stands and is very plentiful. It is a relatively soft hardwood so woodworkers like it for its working properties.

Steve Wall of Wall Lumber says alder is an alternative to cherry.

"Alder sales for us have been pretty flat. We sold a lot more of it when cherry was more expensive and it was used a lot for a cherry substitute. But now you can almost use cherry for the price of alder so we don't use nearly as much as we did," says Wall.

Steve Jackel of West Coast Woods in Watsonville, Calif., says alder sales are very steady and the supply is plentiful.

"It's a regular bread-and-butter product for us. The sales of alder continue to be strong because it's a good product that designers like because it stains well. The only drawback would be the limited widths and lengths available. The price has been about the same and lots of people like it because it's so inexpensive," says Jackel.

Retail prices for 4/4 Select and Better alder were quoted at \$3.30 to \$4/bf. **W**

For more information on wood properties and species information, visit the U.S. Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory's Web site: www.fpl.fs.fed.us.

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▶▶ **LEITZ VECTORCUT** saw blades feature a unique carbide-tipped design that reduces operational friction and heat buildup, according to the manufacturer, which states they offer an average 35 percent longer service, consume 10 percent less horsepower and run much quieter than standard blades (-3db(A)). VectorCut saw blades are currently available in sizes to fit many popular beam saws. For information, call 800-253-6070 or visit www.leitztooling.com.



▶ **BOSCH MEASURING TOOLS** combines the precision of laser measures with the convenience of Bluetooth wireless technology with the launch of the GLM 100 C Laser Measure, according to the company. Featuring an extended measuring distance, memory storage and angle measurement in two axis, the GLM allows users to make accurate measurements that are instantly transferred to smart devices via the free Bosch Measurement mobile app. Measurements also can be superimposed on job-site photos and the unit's functionality can be controlled from smartphones or tablets. A 360-degree tilt sensor offers improved angle functionality, while a large, automatically illuminated flip display makes measurements easy to read. For information, visit www.boschtools.com.



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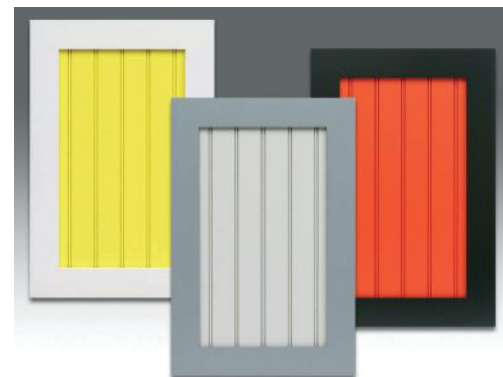
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▲ **LAGUNA TOOLS** introduced the DS16 Dust Separator, which collects 99 percent of wood dust before it enters a shop vacuum, according to the company. The DS16 features a 16-gallon capacity and 360-degree caster wheels. It retails for \$125 and is available exclusively through Laguna Tools' dealers. For information, call 800-234-1976 or visit www.lagunatools.com.

▼ **FLEXHAUST** offers a new flexible dust collection hose that is highly compressible and durable to help maintain a safe and neat woodshop environment, especially in tight quarters, according to the company. Dayflex is an all-plastic hose, featuring a 2:1 stretch ratio, suitable for light-vacuum and low-pressure applications. It's available in 2-1/2" and 4" I.D. sizes, and standard 10' lengths. For information, call 800-343-0428 or visit www.flexhaust.com.



▲ **VERSATILE PANEL DOORS**, from Keystone Wood Specialties, feature reversible panels — beaded on one side and flat on the other. The panels, model VRP-10, can also be easily removed for painting. Other styles are available on request. Choose from Keystone's standard colors or order a custom color match from a supplied sample. All pre-finished Keystone doors include two coats of moisture-resistant catalyzed varnish. VRP-10 Doors can also be ordered unfinished. For information, call 800-233-0289 or visit <http://keystonewood.com>.

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- Rip capacity:
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- Cutting capacity/throat: 13 1/2"
- Max. cutting height: 6"
- Blade size: 92 1/2"-93 1/2" L (1/2"-3/4" W)
- Blade speeds: 1500 & 3200 FPM
- Approx. shipping weight: 196 lbs.



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- Amps: 20A at 110V, 10A at 220V
- RPM: 1725
- Precision-ground cast iron table size: 17" x 17" x 1 1/2" thick
- Table tilt: 10° left, 45° right
- Floor to table height: 37 1/2"
- Cutting capacity/throat: 16 1/4" left
- Blade size: 131 1/2" long
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- Cutterhead speed: 4800 RPM
- Cuts per minute: 20,000 (G0656P), 21,400 (G0656PX)
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- Motor: 3 HP, 220V, single-phase
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- Min. stock thickness: 3/16"
- Min. stock length: 8"
- Max. cutting depth: 1/8"
- Feed rate: 16 & 30 FPM
- Cutterhead speed: 4800 RPM
- Approx. shipping weight: 660 lbs.



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- Max. cutting width: 20"
- Min. stock length: 8"
- Max. cutting depth: 1/8"
- Feed rate: 16 FPM & 20 FPM
- Cutterhead diameter: 3 1/8"
- Number of knives: 4 HSS
- Cutterhead speed: 4800 RPM
- Table size: 20" x 25 3/4" (20" x 55 1/2" with extension)
- Overall dimensions: 55 1/2" L x 39 1/2" W x 45 1/2" H
- Approx. shipping weight: 920 lbs.



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- Conveyor feed rate: Variable, 2-12 FPM
- Max. stock dimensions: 36" W x 4 1/2" H
- Min. board length: 6"
- Min. board thickness: 1/8"
- Sanding drum size: 4"
- 2 1/2" dust collection port
- Overall size: 35" W x 50" H x 24" D
- Approx. shipping weight: 328 lbs.



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YET SO FAR AWAY

BY

JENNIFER HICKS

Mitch Greaves' shop is nestled in New Hampshire's White Mountains, but his business thrives on work in the Boston market

Grab a map and find Littleton, N.H. It's north of the White Mountains, south of St. Johnsbury, Vt., and more than a two-hour drive from the Massachusetts' state line. Why the geography lesson? Well, this is a story of a small-town shop, Littleton Millwork, serving the Boston market and beyond for roughly three decades, and a little perspective might help.

"I have an unusual circumstance where our business is about 150 to 200 miles from our main source of business, but that's because that is the way the company developed at the time and basically it was a market that I created," shop owner Mitch Greaves says. "It would be good to be a little closer to the market, but I feel like I have the best of both

worlds. I work within the city in some of the finest homes in New England. But I live in the White Mountains, which is very rural and just a beautiful place to live."

The Littleton Millwork brand, as Greaves likes to refer to it, was established in 1967 by Greave's father-in-law, George Herbert. It's known as a diversified architectural millwork company, catering mostly to high-end residential clients, building cabinetry, furniture, windows, doors and outbuildings — such as barns, stables and pool houses — for new and historical homes. Anything and everything might be a better way to put it.

It's not hard to see why Greaves likes Littleton. It's a classic small New England

town. Some might call it quaint. Littleton Millwork sort of stands out, occupying a two-story, 17,000-sq.-ft., barn-like structure in the center of town. It looks and feels like an old-time workshop on the inside, with craftsmen at their benches, working independently and as a team, for clients hundreds of miles away.

THE LIGHT-BULB MOMENT

Greaves, who grew up in western Massachusetts and studied anthropology, came to Littleton in 1975 to apprentice with his father-in-law. The first couple of jobs intrigued the student of culture and architecture and the bonds that tie them together.

"We took down a railroad roundhouse and restructured it into a circular cathedral on top of a mountain in Lancaster, N.H.," says Greaves. "Then we began working on a Buddhist retreat."

Greaves read up on Green and Green, Sam Maloof, James Krenov, Tage Frid, George Nakashima, Wendell Castle and other woodworkers he admires. He started marketing the shop in the mid-1980s and settled on Boston as the best target.

"I discovered we couldn't think locally and [sustain] a high-end woodworking company. We needed to be a regional company to create enough of a market, so that's when I drove to Boston."

He spent two days walking through the city and, when he happened upon a job site, introduced himself to the foreman and asked if his company could be of service. Classic gorilla marketing now totally unnecessary.

Owner Mitch Greaves



PHOTO: MICHAEL GORDON

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BUILT TO GO THE DISTANCE



The primary market for Littleton Millworks is high-end homes in the Boston market.



"Our marketing is basically word of mouth from architects and contractors and designers, so our work is typically already sold for us and then we bid projects based on architectural plans," says Greaves.

Greaves assumed ownership in the early '90s. His father-in-law worked at the shop until retiring in 2009 and, at 88, is

remodeling his house.

THE SECRET FORMULA

Littleton Millwork has completed several big jobs in New York, Chicago, Kansas City, Seattle and the British West Indies. There are a few jobs near Littleton every now and then.

"Around here, we see one house being built

every three to four years where they'd be looking at custom woodworking," Greaves says.

The company works mostly with architects and has an in-house design team. "Even in the downtimes we've stayed busy. But in order to stay busy we have to take more work on, so the prices are lower. We contact architects and

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contractors, but about 80 percent of the time they contact us,” says Greaves.

The shop usually has about eight to 10 projects going at one time. Greaves says choreography and time management is a big part of the business. He refers to his 20 employees, from the shop floor to the design department, as “craftspeople with passion.”

“Quality is really No. 1 with our company and the service is No. 2. It’s very important that we provide that with our clients and we look at that with the utmost importance. If you do it that way, the money will follow. It all goes to our reputation for what we build for our clients.

“We have a handful of companies throughout New England that we compete against. It still is a very competitive market and I think that we stay busy by just really providing with what we said before: that quality and service. Sometimes that will buy you more.”

Most of the shop’s machinery is pre-1950 and, as Greaves proudly points out, is American-made. New machinery can be found in the sanding and molding departments. Computers stay in the office.

“We do our own CAD drawings and then forward them to companies that do the CNC work for us,” says Greaves, who has no interest in adding CNC equipment.

“We do some contemporary work, but we don’t limit our style. We build whatever is being asked for. When I first started in this



Luke Greaves, left, and Elizabeth Breuning run the shop’s Smith Machinery flattener.

business, everything was pine. Material trends generate through different species, whether it’s cherry or white oak, everything kind of cycles. Mahogany is always hot.”

LOOKING AHEAD

Greaves hopes the business will continue to expand and he’d welcome more employees if

the volume of work increases. His son, Luke Greaves, has been on board for several years as an apprentice.

“Our biggest challenge is finding experienced woodworkers or cabinetmakers who are interested in living in the North Country,” says Greaves.

Greaves started an apprenticeship program

PHOTO: MICHAEL GORDON

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The shop's extensive portfolio includes this home exterior and kitchen with a vaulted ceiling.

in the '90s and would like to develop it further. He's had good luck with graduates from Boston's North Bennet Street School and the New England School of Architectural Woodworking in Easthampton, Mass. A recent hire comes from the American Woodworking Academy in Fenton, Mo.

"The apprenticeship term lengths depend on the person. Someone that comes in and works for us is trained as an apprentice when they show an interest or a passion. There's no set time. It's really how the individual approaches the learning process," says Greave.

Any woodworker is a friend of Greaves and he's glad to help if he can. He offered up this advice to other shop owners, free of charge: "Pay attention to quality and service. Even if it ends up costing money in the short run, it will pay back twofold in the long run. Don't ever cut corners." **W**

Contact: Littleton Millwork, 44 Lafayette Dr., Littleton, NH 03561. Tel: 603-444-2677. www.littletonmillwork.com

REMODELING MARKET CONTINUES TO SHOW GROWTH

Current and future remodeling business conditions continues to improve, according to third-quarter data compiled by the National Association of the Remodeling Industry.

Quarter-over-quarter increases are evident in nearly all subcomponents measuring remodeling activity.

Entering into the holiday season, which has been a slower season in recent years, remodelers are reporting the highest overall rating on business conditions at 6.41, up from 6.31 reported during the second quarter. This rating has steadily increased in the six quarters the group has been tracking.

"From the comments on the Remodeling Business Pulse survey, pent-up demand continues to drive the current remodeling market," association strategic planning and research committee chairman Tom O'Grady said in a statement. "The general sense is that consumers are tired of waiting and feel more secure about spending money, which is also reflected in the higher values in jobs sold."

Growth indicators in the third quarter of 2013 are as follows (rating is from 1 to 9, where 1 is much worse than a year ago and 9 is much better; 5 is about the same as last year):

- Current business conditions was rated 6.41 (from 6.31 last quarter)
- Number of inquiries up was rated 6.55 (from 6.50 from last quarter)
- Requests for bids remained the same as last quarter, at 6.45
- Conversion of bids to jobs was rated 6.00 (from 5.91 last quarter)
- Value of jobs sold was rated 6.31 (from 6.12 from last quarter)

"As we enter the holiday season, inquiries about projects don't slow, but the conversion rate inquiries to sales tends to, which has been reflected in the last two third-quarter Remodeling Business Pulse surveys," O'Grady said. "It's hard to judge for sure, after consumers spend money during the holidays, how serious they will be in the new year to get that remodeling project under way."

Other significant contributors to overall activity:

- Postponed projects continue to be the key factor in remodeling business growth at 85 percent
- Improving home prices came in at the secondary at 72 percent of respondents (up from 65 percent last quarter)
- Certainty about the future moved into the No. 3 spot at 48 percent (edging out economic growth, which came in at No. 3 in the second quarter)

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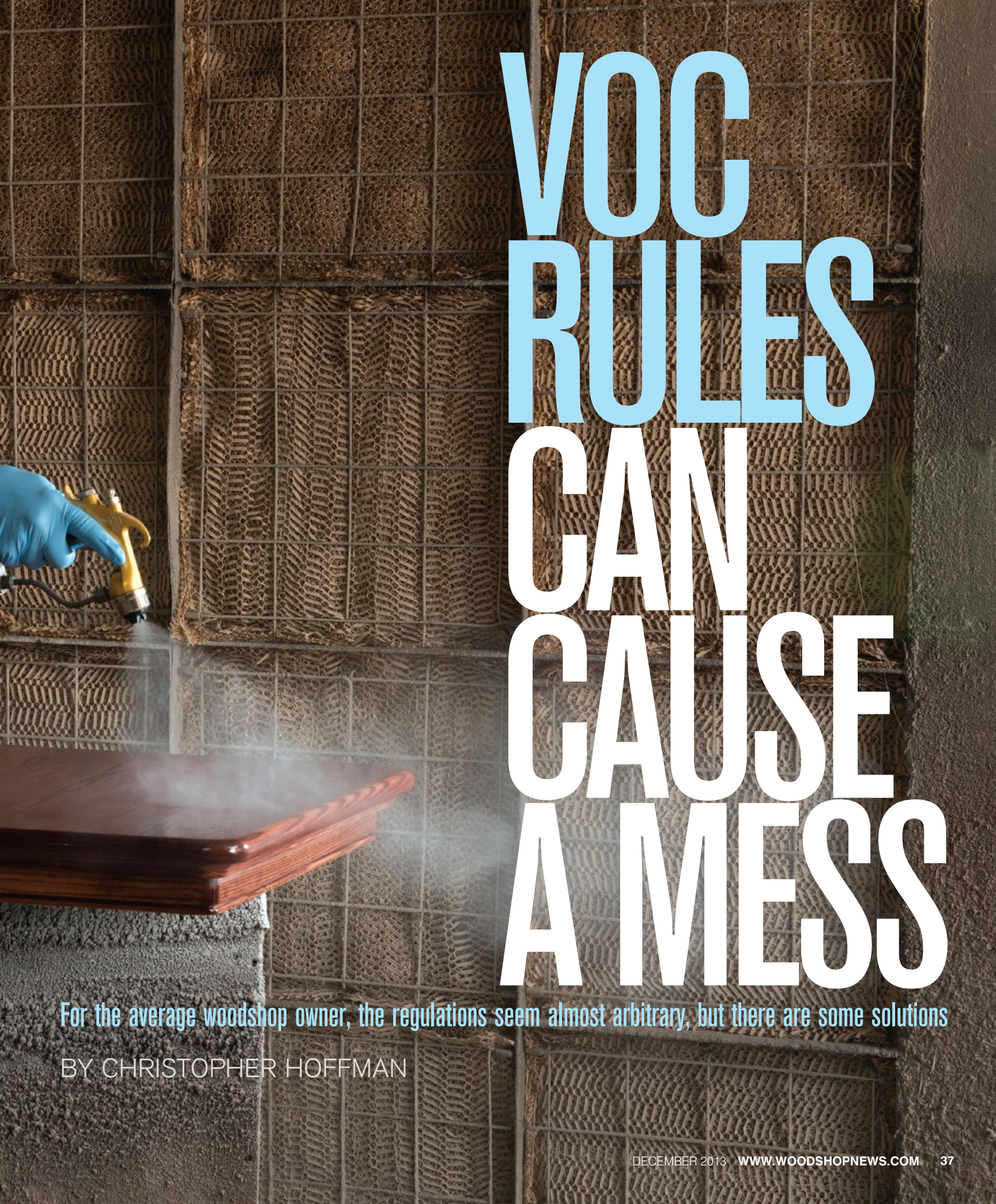


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A hand in a blue nitrile glove holds a yellow spray gun, applying a finish to a wooden surface. The background is a wall of square tiles with a woven, basket-weave pattern. The title 'VOC RULES CAN CAUSE A MESS' is overlaid on the right side of the image. 'VOC' and 'RULES' are in light blue, while 'CAN CAUSE A MESS' is in white.

VOC RULES CAN CAUSE A MESS

For the average woodshop owner, the regulations seem almost arbitrary, but there are some solutions

BY CHRISTOPHER HOFFMAN

Cabinet Makers Association executive director David Grulke sums up regulation of volatile organic compounds, a vital component of most varnishes, paints and stains, with one word.

"Morass," Grulke says.

The nation is a confusing crazy quilt of VOC rules and jurisdictions, Grulke and others say. Some regions like the Orange County, Calif., area have stringent regulations that come close to banning VOCs, while others have virtually no restrictions, they say. Jurisdictions can range from states to air quality management districts to local fire departments.

Even more confusing for the average woodshop owner is that the regulations seem almost arbitrary. Cross a street from one local jurisdiction into another and restrictions on VOCs can go from stringent to non-existent.

"Frankly, they've made a huge mess of it," says Greg Williams, a former touchup and finishing instructor for Mohawk Finishing products and consultant. "You'll find one shop on one side of a state line doing 'A' and a shop on the other side of the state line doing 'B.' "

The patchwork regulation has left woodshop owners and even regulators confused as to what rules apply where. It presents a challenge to stain, paint and varnish manufacturers who must produce dozens of variations of their products with different VOC levels to sell in the many different jurisdictions.

"Even in Orange County, there are maps of different districts and clean-air regions within the county," says Phil Stevenson, executive director the American Wood Finishing Institute. "The state map is just a maze."

All of this leaves the average shop owner in a quandary.

"There's certainly a concern about it," Williams says. "It's very difficult for the small operator to know what the rules are and how they are going to be applied. It's so complicated that a lot of OSHA inspectors don't understand it well enough to make the distinction between what is perfectly legal and illegal."



The current patchwork regulation has left finishers and regulators confused as to what regulations apply where.

FEDS GETTING INVOLVED

While the federal government has not yet imposed national standards, it's looking at new restrictions, Stevenson says. The EPA has already announced plans to set rules for formaldehyde in wood products.

Stevenson added, however, he thinks that national VOC regulation might still be far in the future. Whether a shop should convert to low or no VOC materials — which can be difficult and expensive — depends on where you are and what you are doing, he says.

"What I tell my attendees, I say, you know what, you guys should be looking at it and if you're worried about compliance, keep an eye on it," Stevenson says.

Stevenson and other experts are much less concerned about the EPA's

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Rolf Wallace of Littleton Millworks holds a finished shutter.

proposed restrictions on formaldehyde. Most smaller woodshops work with materials that could contain the substance, but don't use it in manufacturing. Domestic producers have already reduced their levels, they say. Imported plywood, however, can still be a problem, Grulke says.

"The domestic manufacturers are producing mostly no formaldehyde or low formaldehyde product," he says.

THE PROBLEM WITH VOCs

Paints, varnishes, stains and other liquid finishing products have two basic components: resin, which adheres to a surface creating a coat of paint or stain, and solvent that liquefies the resin allowing it to be applied.

Solvents containing VOCs have long been used in wood-finishing materials because they produce the best results and are the easiest to use, Williams says.

But VOCs are a pollutant. When paint or stain dries, the solvent evaporates, taking any VOCs with it. VOCs in the atmosphere contribute to smog, acid rain and other environmental problems, Williams says.

As a result, areas of the country like Orange County, Calif., and the Great Lakes that are especially vulnerable to smog or acid rain have imposed ever greater restrictions on VOC emissions, Williams says.

Some European countries like Sweden have gone even further, all but banning VOCs, Stevenson says.

The challenge for manufacturers is to make low- or non-VOC paints, varnishes and stains that are as easy to use and as high quality as their VOC cousins. To eliminate VOCs completely requires going to water-based products, which have traditionally been inferior to those containing VOCs, experts say.

In addition, low or non-VOC products are significantly more expensive



PHOTO: MICHAEL GORDON



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and require different equipment and application techniques.

"It can be a big investment in dollars particularly if they have to replace equipment," Grulke says. "There's certainly a learning curve that goes with anything new. When you're a small shop, those costs are magnified."



VOC ALTERNATIVES

Shop owners seeking to slash VOCs have options, Williams says.

"Water-based is not the only evolving technology that would answer these questions," he says. "It's not the only way out of the quandary we're in."

One alternative is to use environmentally friendly VOCs such as acetone exempted from restrictions, Williams says.

But acetone has numerous drawbacks, he says. It dries faster than solvents containing traditional VOCs and is more susceptible to humidity, he says. Blushing and other problems can arise, he says.

Other technologies include scrubbers to capture VOCs before they can into the atmosphere and UV or electromagnetic devices that apply finishes much more efficiently, reducing VOC levels, Williams says. All are expensive, but many larger industrial operations in areas with severe restrictions have adopted them, he says.

One option for smaller shops is better and more efficient spray equipment and application techniques, Williams says. By getting more bang from the buck, the shop can significantly reduce its VOC output, he says.

"You have an application that is twice as effective, and you may be able to use half as much," Williams says.

While the federal government has not yet imposed national standards, it's looking at new restrictions.

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Water-based VOC-free materials are becoming more of an option.

GOING WATER-BASED

Stevenson says that water-based VOC-free materials are becoming more of an option. They are better and cheaper than they were 10 years ago, he says. Big technological advances were being made until the 2008 financial crisis. As the economy has improved, those advances have resumed, he says.

"The industry is changing," Stevenson says. "You've got companies that are increasing their interest in water-based technology, particularly the Sherwin-Williamses of the world. They're beginning to invest more in water."

Some European countries like Sweden have converted almost entirely to water-based products, Stevenson says. Their technology and products are excellent, far ahead of those produced in the U.S., he says.

"The reason for that is that there's a national mandate," Stevenson says. "Sweden and other nations have pushed hard on the environment and the coating industry must be water-based. The European-based

technology is far superior than what is in use here."

Also assisting Sweden's switch to water-based materials is the profile of its woodworking industry, Stevenson says. Large firms dominate in contrast to the small shops that prevail in the U.S., giving them the cash to convert.

The biggest obstacles to adoption of water-based coatings are cost and a desire not to learn new techniques, Stevenson says.

"It's mainly considered a pain in the butt," he says.

But Stevenson says his group recently did a study for a larger manufacturer showing that water-based coatings are economically competitive with VOC technology. The study showed that coating costs would go up 30 to 35 percent, but that was offset by savings in clean up and lower health and fire insurance rates, he says.

"We found that the total cost of doing business, it's almost a break even," Stevenson says. "In some cases, it's a little cheaper. But that of course depends on what you are doing."

Converting to water is very doable if shops have the right training and equipment, he says.

"It's really not that hard to get them converted," Stevenson says. "It does work. A lot of it comes down to education and training."

But Stevenson added that American water-based technology "isn't quite there." His advice to shop owners: Do what you have to comply with local regulations, but wait if you can.

"If you are in California, [you] better start converting," he says. "But if you can, let technology get better until you switch."

With only about 10 percent of woodshops employing water, Stevenson estimated it would be decades before usage reaches Swedish levels.

"California 20 years ago, they were saying in five years, it's going to be nothing but water," he says. "But even now sales of water are not that high. Everyone is fighting for solvents." **W**

PHOTO: TOM CALLINS/REDUX PLUS

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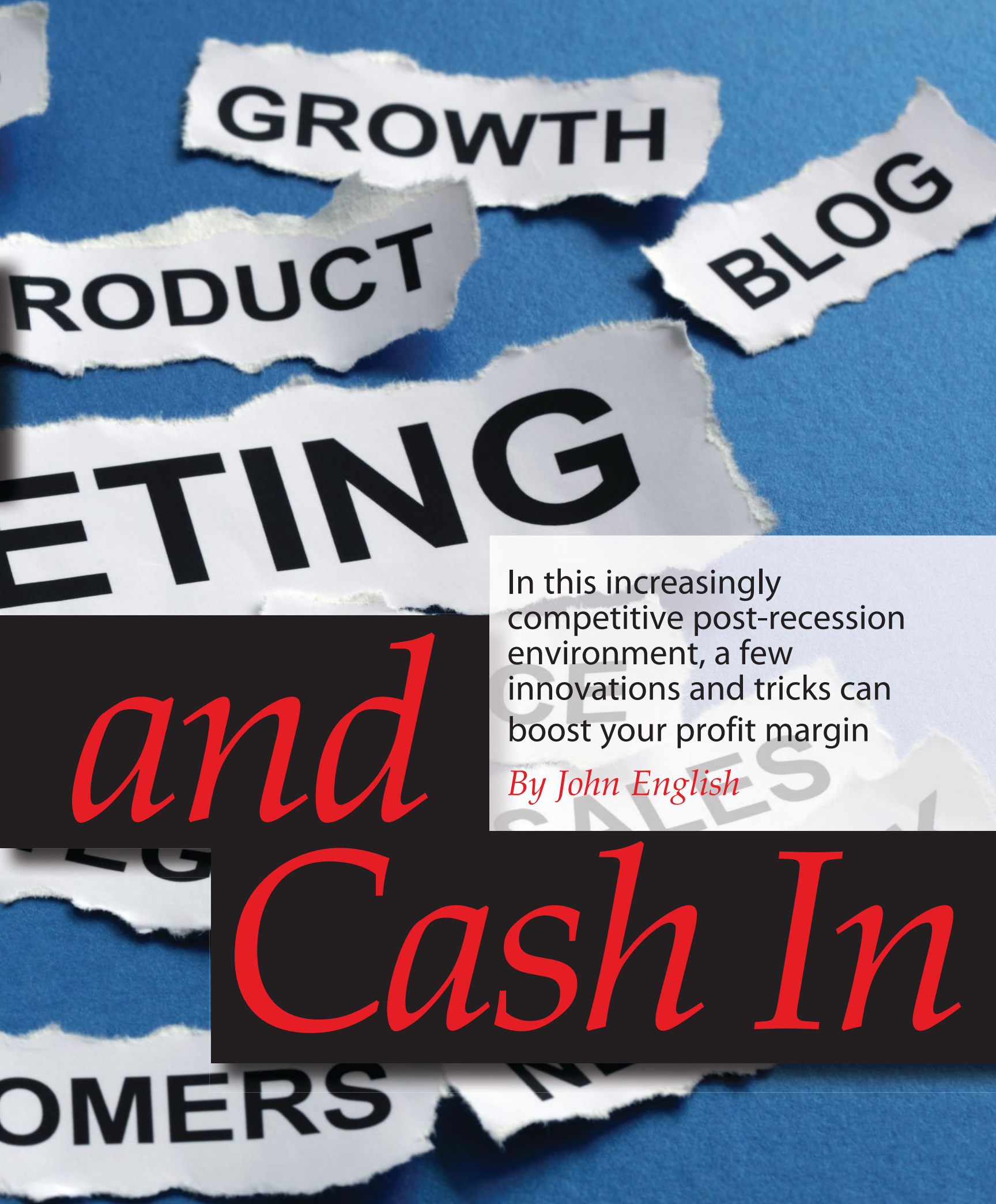
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In this increasingly competitive post-recession environment, a few innovations and tricks can boost your profit margin

By John English

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We had a little work done on the home place a few months ago.

A contractor came in and gave us a price, we signed the papers and all these very professional people showed up one after the other until everything was done. My thought at the time was that this guy runs a really tight ship and that his employees must have a great deal of respect for him.

Only, they weren't his employees. They were all subcontractors.

And it suddenly occurred to me that the perfect model for growing a woodshop business was right there — the age-old contractor/subcontractor relationship. Instead of adding production staff and advertising casework, one could simply sell more services to existing customers.

How many kitchens or baths have we all done through the years where we waited for some homeowner-hired subcontractor to wrap up his

portion of the job before we could get in to do ours? We're not talking about the mechanicals here — no woodshop wants to get involved in electric, plumbing or HVAC. But tile setters, flooring installers and painters all hold us up, too. What if we supplied those subcontractors to the homeowner? It seems so simple and so obvious — and yet virtually nobody does it. By supplying a steady stream of work to these subs, a woodshop could quickly build trust and loyalty and have them work on our jobs when we need them rather than when it's convenient for them to be there. By managing these services for our clients, we can legitimately and ethically add a fee (call it a markup), helping our bottom line without expending too many resources.

The general contractors win, too. Instead of coordinating three or four different subs and scheduling them, they only have to work with one — you.

Give away space?

Taking the symbiotic concept a little further, a woodshop that already hooks up with an interior designer might consider bringing that relationship in-house. If you're already working with a good local designer who has earned a solid reputation, why not offer him/her your showroom — for free. They get a place to display their wares without paying rent and you get the best-looking showroom in town. They can work around your existing cabinet displays, adding wall and floor options that help sell what you already make.

Taking this a little further, you might even want to integrate their design software with your production package or, better yet, train them on your CAD system. While you would be involved in any wood-based elements of their design, you would just step out of the way when they tackle drapes and rugs and paint colors. They gain a workshop that understands how they work and you get their entire client list to buy casework, furniture and even trim packages from you.

If you have floor space available, this same model could also work

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The nature of service

Our national economy is changing. We still make planes and cars and feed the world, but the service sector is also growing at a very healthy rate. And the service element of physical products is also growing. Take, for example, the cellphone, which is the most intrusive icon of our new world. We only buy a new phone every year or two, but we pay a whopping bill every month for service. Most of us will go down to the phone store and stand in line for half an hour to have some 18-year-old magically fix a tiny glitch on our phones, rather than pore over a manual for days trying to remedy it ourselves.

Our customers feel exactly like that, too.

They want a custom kitchen or a built-in buffet and, while they have the overall concept down, they don't quite know all the details yet. In cellphone terms, they know which phone they want, but they don't quite know how to make it send a photo to Grandma. While most woodworkers just want to get the cabinet design nailed down and start production, we might be missing out on a huge opportunity here. Instead of a flip phone, our customers might just be asking us to provide the latest iPhone. If we're not listening, they'll settle for the same old things we've always done and our bottom line will amble along unperturbed.

If we educate ourselves on options, that will change.

Knowing what's new in terms of Lazy Susans or hidden wine racks, drawer slides or hardware, LEDs, touch pads, countertop materials, back splashes, even recycling centers are at the core of the word "custom" in our business. This service — being able to reveal and offer the latest options — has the potential to change our customer



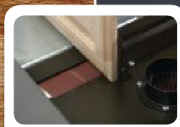
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base from one niche in the market to the next. The biggest and best jobs are awarded to shops that know what's new.

So how does a two-man shop in rural Iowa keep up with the latest trends? By investing in a plane ticket once a year. Each summer, there is a major trade show in either Las Vegas or Atlanta (the operators and locations alternate). Here at your feet is every single aspect of our industry from sheet goods to design software, hinges to hardwoods. Furniture builders, cabinetmakers and specialty woodworkers from all over the world congregate for a few days and explore options, share ideas and invite manufacturers to delight, surprise and educate them. Then they bring back what they have learned and, hopefully, share it with their customers. This service, this expertise, is one very large key to growing your business. If you don't have anything new to show your clients, they will eventually move along. And if the shop down the street isn't keeping up with the industry, their customers will eventually find you if you are doing your homework.

Use social media

Beyond bringing subs on board and offering the latest product options, there are a few smaller ways that a woodshop can add services to gain more business. One of these is to explore the possibilities of social media. It seems simple, but most shops don't yet talk to their clients through Facebook and Twitter. Heck, some of us hardly answer the phone. Customer service has changed and, in a world where people can Google "custom cabinet shop" and get 300 options, it seems shortsighted for us to ignore this incredibly powerful tool. A decent website or Facebook page can bring your palette to the client, rather than having them come to you. If your shop is on or near a main thoroughfare, then pasting a banner in the front window with

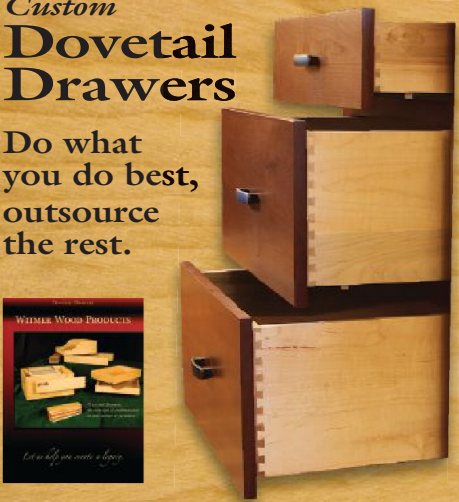
Shop owner Craig Weis does the paper-work shuffle in his office at Architectural Woodcraft in Asheville, N.C.



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a Web address (URL) and the words "See What We Can Build!" will definitely bring traffic to your site. Once there, potential customers really do need to see what you can build. Give them lots of photos of work you have done: a picture is worth a thousand words.

Then, add services online.

Consider giving people access to a program that lets them choose door styles or hardware or perhaps even lay out a floor plan for a kitchen or bathroom. You can link to manufacturer sites with videos that explain the different options for drawer slides or corner cabinets. Give them stain colors and molding profiles and countertop choices at their fingertips, so that they can begin the design process themselves and become so involved that they need to come to you with questions.

One of the nice things about maintaining a Facebook page for your business is that it can be done from anywhere at any time of the day or night. However, that's not a very businesslike approach to scheduling and it's subject to a lack of discipline. By setting aside a few minutes at the same time every day or maybe twice a week, one can develop a habit of updating that keeps the site fresh. One can easily find material to upload — photos of work that's ready to go out the door or that has just been installed or small cameos of people in the shop or office or new products that catch your eye. Uploading a page and then letting it sit for months unchanged is simply a waste of time.

Another way that a woodshop can add services to gain more business is to find a product to make during slow times. An old friend in Minneapolis, now gone, used to spend his downtime building simple rough-sawn shelving units (see photo, page 45) for retail stores. They were just screwed together, unsanded and unfinished, using whatever species of hardwood boards he could find cheaply at the sawmill. He couldn't keep up with demand. Antique-, toy- and bookstores loved the product, especially when the boards retained one natural edge and sometimes a little bark. He didn't overcharge, so his bark was worse than his bite. **W**

SCM Group Canada partners with Drolet Machinerie

SCM Group Canada entered an exclusive distributor partnership with Drolet Machinerie for the entire territory of Quebec and surrounding area.

Drolet Machinerie will represent a wide range of SCM Group brands that include Celaschi squaring/profiling, DMC wide-belt sanders, Gabbiani panel saws, Morbidelli CNC, Stefani edgebanders, Routech CNC routers, SCM molders, Superfici finishing and Sergiani presses.

"Drolet Machinerie is very well known for their knowledge of high-end equipment, professional approach to business and commitment to excellent customer service in the Quebec market place," SCM Group Canada president Richard Bluteau said in a statement. "We are certain this partnership will allow us to continue providing exceptional customer support and innovative solution to our Quebec customers."

Mohawk names salesperson of the year

Mohawk Finishing Products, a division of RPM Wood Finishes Group Inc., recently announced Doug Groot as its 2013 Salesperson of the Year.

Groot, from Lake Zurich, Ill., has been with Mohawk Finishing Products for 29 Years. He was honored for his commitment to Mohawk as well as his proven team leadership skills, excellence in customer service and performance in all facets of the Mohawk business, according to the company.

Design in Wood issues call for entries

The San Diego Fine Woodworkers Association is seeking entries for its 33rd annual Design in Wood exhibition, scheduled for June 7 to July 6, 2014 at the San Diego County Fair in Del Mar, Calif.

The competition, open to all woodworkers, features 24 categories and awards totaling over \$21,000. Next year's exhibit theme is "The Fab Fair," celebrating to the people and sounds of the 60s.

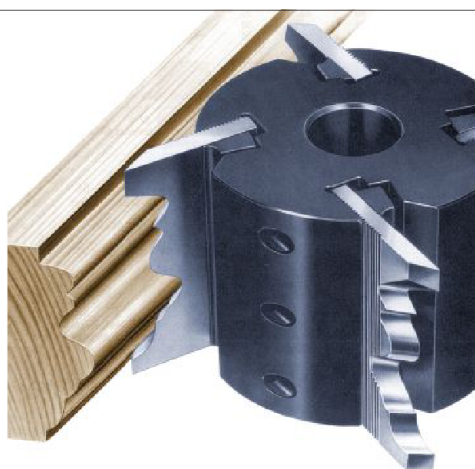
Entry forms will be available in January. For information, visit www.sdfwa.org.

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A look back at Design in Wood

Winning entries from this summer's annual exhibition of the San Diego Fine Woodworkers Association



Best of Show: "Unfinished Table" by Boris Khechoyan.



First place, novice category: Cherry rocker by Terry Sullivan.

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Master Woodworker's Trophy: "Iris Cabinet" by Thomas Stockton.



SDFWA President's Award: Buffet with three drawers by David Marr.



Excellence in Workmanship: Jewelry stand with seven drawers by Brian Carnett.

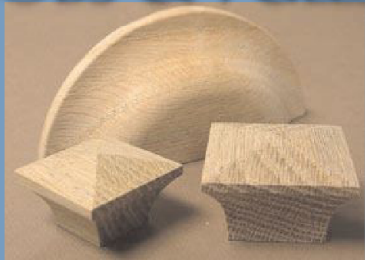
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Entries must be received by the 15th of the month, three months prior to the event.

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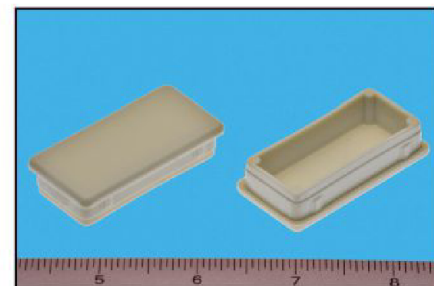
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CALENDAR

O meetings, classes or shows of interest to professional or hobbyist woodworkers are invited to submit items to: Calendar, Woodshop News, 10 Bokum Road, Essex, CT 06426; editorial@woodshopnews.com.

Include name, dates, location, description of event and a contact address or telephone number. Calendar items, which should be typed or printed clearly, must be received a minimum of 60 days before the event.

Please note that fees, as listed, might not include materials or shop fees. Check with a specific class for further details.

The complete national calendar of events is continuously updated at www.woodshopnews.com.

— Compiled by Jennifer Hicks

CALIFORNIA

Monthly — San Fernando Valley Woodworkers meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Balboa Park Sports Complex, Gym Building, at 17015 Burbank Boulevard in Encino. www.sfvw.org

FLORIDA

Ongoing — The Dunedin Fine Art Center is offering six-week woodturning classes at its Cottage Campus taught by AAW professional member Tony Marsh for beginners and intermediate-level participants. Full day classes are held on Thursdays. Call 727-298-3322 or e-mail education@dfac.org for information.

Monthly — Woodcrafters Club of Tampa meets every third Thursday evening at 3809 W. Broad St. in Tampa. For information, visit www.tampawoodcrafters.org.

GEORGIA

Aug. 20-23, 2014 — IWF, the largest showcase of machinery, materials, supplies, and services in the Western Hemisphere for woodworking and related industries. Location: Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta. www.iwfatlanta.com

March 7-9, 2014 — The Woodworking Show, Atlanta. Location: TBD. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

INDIANA

Jan. 17-19, 2014 — The Woodworking Show, Indianapolis. Location: Indiana State Fairgrounds Toyota Blue Ribbon Pavilion. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

MAINE

Jan. 26-March 28 — Twelve-Week Turning Intensive. A new program offering professional training in woodturning. Location: Center for Furniture Craftsmanship. www.woodschoolorg

MARYLAND

Jan. 3-5, 2014 — The Woodworking Show, Baltimore. Location: Maryland State Fairgrounds Cow Palace in Timonium. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

Feb. 21-23 — American Craft Council Baltimore show. A three-day show featuring custom furniture and other items from juried artisans around the country. Location: Baltimore Convention Center. www.craftcouncil.org

MASSACHUSETTS

Dec. 1 — The Best Workman in the Shop: William Munroe and Concord Federal Furniture. Lecture by curator David Wood, Fuller Craft Museum. Location: Brockton. www.fullercraft.org

Dec. 1 — The Best Workman in the Shop: William Munroe and Concord Federal Furniture. Lecture by curator David Wood, Concord (Mass.) Museum. Location: Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton. www.fullercraft.org

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Jan. 10-12, 2014 — The Woodworking Show, New England. Location: Eastern States Exposition in West Springfield. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

MISSOURI

Feb. 7-9, 2014 — The Woodworking Show, St. Louis. Location: Gateway Center Hall in Collinsville. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

Feb. 28-March 2, 2014 — The Woodworking Show, Kansas City. Location: Kemper Arena Grounds. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

NEW JERSEY

Feb. 21-23, 2014 — The Woodworking Show, Somerset. Location: Garden State Exhibit Center. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

NEVADA

Feb. 4-6 — Annual Kitchen and Bath Industry Show held in conjunction with National Association of Homebuilders International Builders' Show at the Las Vegas Convention Center. One entry fee for both shows. www.kbis.com or www.buildersshow.com

NEW YORK

Monthly — Sawdust and Woodchips Woodworking Association meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at

the Canton Woods Center in Baldwinsville. www.sawdustwoodchips.org

OHIO

Jan. 31-Feb. 2, 2014 — The Woodworking Show, Columbus. Location: Ohio Expo Center Voinovich Trade Center. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

PENNSYLVANIA

April 4-6 — The 20th annual Philadelphia Invitational Furniture Show featuring fine furniture and other handcrafted items from custom artisans around the country. Location: 23rd St. Armory downtown. www.philaifs.com

SOUTH DAKOTA

Monthly — The South Dakota Woodworkers Guild meets the last Thursday of every month (except August) at various members' shops. The club has hand tool and woodturning groups. www.sdwoodworker.org

TEXAS

March 28-30, 2014 — The Woodworking Show, Houston. Location: Montgomery County Fairgrounds in Conroe. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

WISCONSIN

Feb. 14-16, 2014 — The Woodworking Show,

Milwaukee. Location: Wisconsin Expo Center Hall C in West Allis. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

WYOMING

Sept. 4-7, 2014 — Western Design Conference. Annual show featuring furniture and other items from Western-influenced designers and artists from across the country. Location: Snow King Center in Jackson Hole. www.westerndesignconference.com

GENERAL TOOLS WINS INNOVATION AWARDS

Three products from General Tools & Instruments were named winners in the first Pro Tool Innovation Awards competition.

A panel of professional tradesman for Pro Tool Reviews, an online tool review magazine, selected General's iBorescope, 4:1 IR thermometer and digital sliding T-bevel as the year's most innovative products.

"We set out to determine which tools, accessories and fasteners are the best. We knew this would be challenging and competitive, and we were right. Over 40 manufacturers entered more than 150 products," Pro Tool Reviews editor-in-chief Clint DeBoer said in a statement. "We believe the winning products represent the cream of the crop, offering increased efficiency and value through truly unique and advantageous features that are key for professional contractors and technicians."

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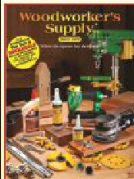


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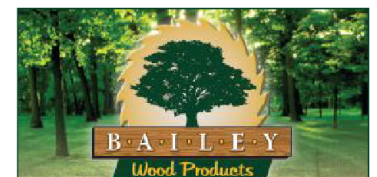
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Laguna's SmartShop CNC router, shown at the AWFS fair in July.

Laguna Tools starts CNC contest for schools

Laguna Tools, a seller of professional woodworking equipment, recently announced its inaugural \$1,000 CNC School Competition, which is designed to highlight creativity in today's woodworking educational programs. The program, which has a Dec. 15 entry deadline, gives educators at trade schools, high schools and colleges a chance to share their creativity for \$1,000 in cash to use for their program.

Laguna vice president Catherine Helshoj says the company is reaching out to woodworking department heads across the country to raise awareness of the competition. Participants will be asked what they would do with the extra money if they won and what woodworking project they would tackle if they had a new Laguna Tools CNC machine. For those institutions that already have a Laguna CNC machine, they are asked to outline their favorite project completed to date.

"Because CNCs are the woodworking industry's future, it's a natural evolution of woodworking education. It's a natural change of traditional woodworking to computerized woodworking," says Helshoj.

"This contest is important to us because with a 30-year history that started on stationary machinery, we've seen the demand for CNCs increase at a phenomenal rate, so obviously to maintain our business we had to bring on a new product line. With the schools we've seen an amazing demand for CNC machines, so it's a great way of us supporting them."

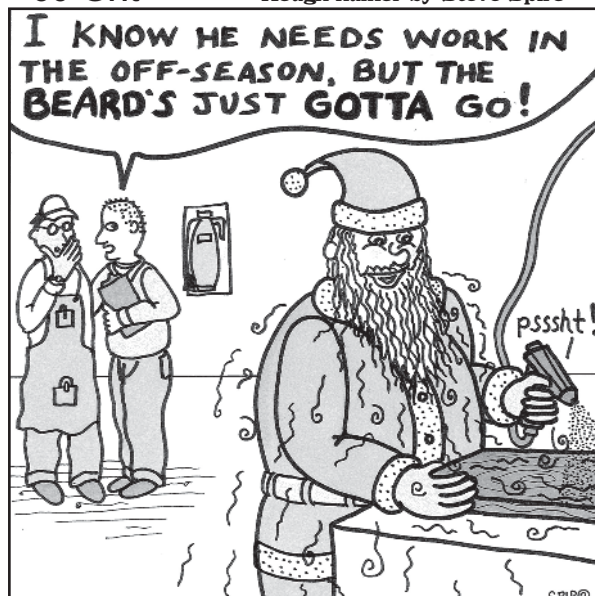
The winning program can decide how it spends the cash prize, but Helshoj says CNC purchases are encouraged. She says an increasing number of woodworking programs are preparing students by using Laguna Tools CNC machines because they want to teach them the importance of using shop space more efficiently, boosting production, reducing waste, lowering overhead costs and enhancing profits.

The company offers an extensive lineup of CNC machines for nested-based manufacturing purposes.

Entry forms are available at www.lagunatools.com. **W**

60 Grit

Rough humor by Steve Spiro



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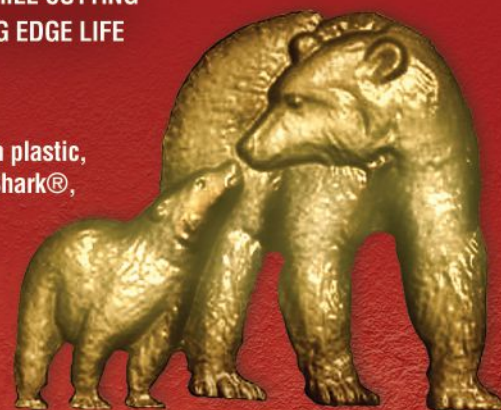
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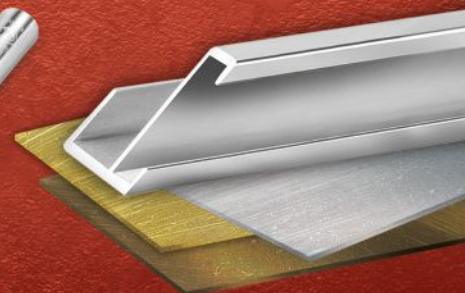
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