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- PECO Pallet Names New CEO
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Softwood Lumber Prices
Our monthly softwood price graph, courtesy of NRCAN.

WPA Welcomes New Members
WPA welcomes Go Fast Mfg as a new member.

WPA Members Share Social Media Expertise
Annie Montey and Callen Cochran provide best practice tips.

Go Fast Mfg Looks West
The newest WPA member offers resaws, dedusters and other equipment.

Logistics and Location
Oakland Pallet Company explains the rationale for its move to Stockton.
This year’s membership drive is already in motion.

Mark Brosman
Pallet Logistics Management
St. Louis, MO

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June 2016
Is it time for a company rebrand?  

Cover Story

Other Features

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North American Softwood Prices

Weekly softwood lumber prices to June 21, 2016 are shown below, sourced at http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/forests/industry/13309.

2016 Membership Now Due

WPA membership payment is due on July 1. Please pay online by following this link, or remit to:
Western Pallet Association
PO box 1095, Camas, WA 98607

WPA New Member

WPA is pleased to welcome the following new member:

Dan Berken
Go Fast MFG
N 5531 State Road 76
Shiocton, WI 54170
ph: (920)986-1173
fax: (920)227-1961
web: www.gofastmfg.com
email: office@gofastmfg.com
WPA Members Share Social Media Expertise

WPA members Annie Montey of American Pallet and Callen Cochran of United Pallet Services kindly shared some of their social media experiences and insights in the June issue of Pallet Enterprise magazine.

The article found that generally speaking, the pallet industry is much less active in social media than for small or medium-sized business overall.

The story outlines some basic best practices for companies looking to start out in social media.

One of those tips will be to take advantage of the new WPA social media campaign.

"I'd encourage WPA members who have authored articles either for their own blog, LinkedIn, or other industry publications to contact me with links to those articles," Annie said. "It's essentially free promotion. If the

Cont'd on Page 10
Go Fast Mfg Offers Quality, Value-Priced Machinery for Pallet Industry

New member Dan Berken of Go Fast Mfg is happy to join the WPA, and is looking forward to creating greater exposure in the West for the Go Fast product line. Go Fast is known for its reliable, competitively priced resaws and dedusters. The company also supplies other equipment such as stacking racks, double end trimmers, chop saws and more.

Dan had used the equipment himself for many years before acquiring the company in 2013. With his many years of experience in the sawmill and pallet industry behind him coupled with a strong eye for business and equipment design, he modernized each of the main products offered.

Dan is looking forward to attending the WPA 2017 Annual Meeting this coming January in Palm Springs.
WPA Member News (Cont)

article generates a high rate of engagement then it'll be re-shared several times a year.”

Callen emphasized that participation is getting easier and more inexpensive due to the availability of more free tools.

“There is Hootsuite for social media publishing and monitoring, Wix for website and blog publishing, Mailchimp for newsletter management, and Google Analytics for website traffic information,” Callen said. “All of these are free or at least have the basic features available for free.”

Logistics for Customer Service: Oakland Pallet Talks About Its New Location

Last month, we briefly announced that WPA-member Oakland Pallet had consolidated its operations into a new, Stockton location. Manuel Padilla provided additional detail to Western Pallet:

The new facility will provide the space necessary to process packaging materials efficiently coming in from third party logistic companies. The inbound packaging items include pallets, frames and dunnage materials. Once materials are unloaded we proceed to sort, repair, grade and ship back to customer pool for repackaging. The processing facility has sufficient warehouse space to hold adequate inventory for JIT requests.

Stockton is a main artery to the Northern California region, Our goal is to be able to effectively manage loads and reduce the transportation cost while

Cont'd on Page 12
minimizing shipping delays. We are currently securing an additional location in Woodland, California to further streamline our shipping. We estimate that once all of our facilities are fully operational we will be able to significantly reduce the time it takes to reach our customers.

Being able to respond to the needs of our customers is of great importance to Oakland Pallet Co, Inc., Manuel concluded. Having the infrastructure in place at strategic locations will enable us to adjust effectively to the ever changing environment. Having the ability to adjust to unforeseen peaks in customer production activity is imperative to establishing a long lasting relationship.

WPA Membership Drive Competition

This year's membership drive is now underway, and as always, the competition will be intense.

In addition to valuable cash prizes, the winner now also receives the membership trophy, presented at the Annual Meeting. With the highly successful 2016 Annual Meeting now in the books, it is time to work toward 2017.

When you recruit new members, the entire WPA membership is the winner!

New members can join and pay on the website. Here is the link: www.westernpallet.org
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Videos Available!
Nazareth Pallet Featured on Television Sportscast

When it comes to marketing activities done by a pallet company, one operation worth checking out is Pennsylvania-based Nazareth Pallet. They have a very active social media presence. In addition, they have done things like wrapping company vehicles to give them better visibility (see at right).

Another initiative has been to sponsor local professional sports teams, including the Lehigh Valley Phantoms of the American Hockey League.

That sponsorship led to the interview opportunity for George Frack Jr., which can be viewed by clicking on the video clip above. (Thanks to a social media share by NWPCA President Brent McClendon.)

Did you know that Nazareth Pallet was featured last year in Pallet Enterprise Magazine? Click here to read that report.
Putting a wrap on your pallet company marketing efforts!

Nazareth Pallet is active in social media. A recent Facebook post announces the company's interest in hiring a new dispatcher.
Is It Time to Rebrand Your Company?

The importance of brands

In earlier times, before it became practice to brand wood pallets, the brand was used to mark the ownership of cattle. The use of the term came to then be associated with marks used by specific companies and products, as those producers sought to differentiate their offerings from others. Those marks and logos continue to play an important role in signaling important information to buyers. According to research, people acquire about 90 percent of information visually. As such, it makes sense that visual branding cues would play an important role.

Current thinking, however, emphasizes that your company’s brand is much more than a logo or a trademark. Your brand is more akin to your reputation. It has to do with how it is received by customers and what they perceive it to be. It is important, experts stress, to create a brand that is responsive to customer needs. If you think your brand stands for “great service for all your unit load requirements” while customers see it as “just a local supplier of recycled pallets” then it might be time to change things up.

As Creative Companies, a branding services provider, puts it, a rebrand becomes a public expression of your company's evolution and a statement about its growth, progress and relevance.

Nature’s Packaging is a rebranding exercise for wood packaging

At an industry level, the Nature’s Packaging initiative can be viewed as a crucial rebranding exercise that helps communicate the benefits of wood packaging to an audience increasingly concerned about sustainability, as well as providing important fact-based content to counter any negative perceptions in the marketplace. As stated at the Naturespackaging.org website:

*Nature’s Packaging is a North American initiative to develop and deliver sound, fact-based materials on the environmental opportunities associated with your wood packaging selection decisions. It is our firm belief this information will lead to your expanded use of wood packaging, and collectively we’ll improve the environment while addressing the growing needs of global distribution.*
Four Reasons to rebrand your company

According to experts, there are several reasons that should give you pause to consider rebranding your company. Here are four of them:

**Competition**
If you find that customers perceive you to be “just another pallet company,” it might prove useful to identify your source of differentiation and competitive advantage, both through internal reflection, as well as competition analysis and reaching out to trading partners. By talking to your best customers, you may discover what they value most in your relationship.

**Growth**
As companies grow, the business may go in diverse directions, such as starting a mulch business, branching from used to new pallets, or perhaps to custom crating or dock sweeps. A rebranding may be required to create a harmony or consistency of messaging through the coordination of color usage or logo, for example.

**Acquisition**
When companies are acquired, thought has to be given to the value of the acquired brand, and how rebranding should or should not incorporate the legacy branding.

**Employees**
Rebranding can also be a great way to energize your employees. Aside from handing out rebranded business cards, or driving freshly rebranded vehicles, it can be used as a platform to clarify your company’s vision and aspirations for profitability and future growth. It is an opportunity to stress the importance of employees in delivering the experience to customers that will help the company achieve those aspirations.

Wood packaging is being rebranded through the Natue's Packaging initiative

June 2016
The CWPCA is pleased to announce Kelowna, British Columbia as its host city for this year's Western Focus Meeting Sept 18-20.

Current plans include:

- a tour of the region's vineyards followed by a feast on locally sourced fare
- a meeting session which will cover a range of current and “hot button” topics, and
- a bus tour through the mountains culminating in a tour of a large lumber operation.

Delegates may choose to end their meeting after the tour, or hang on for one more day for an HT Program training session the following morning.

Mill and speaker details will follow very shortly.

The host facility is the beautiful Cove Lakeside Resort, a lakeside gem on the western shore of Lake Okanagan. Special room rates have been negotiated and bookings can be made online, or by phone.

The Cove is an all-suite resort offering one and two bedroom suites. The negotiated rate is $229 for a one-bedroom and $299 for a two bedroom, two bath suite (ideal for sharing!). Guest rooms are limited, so if you are planning on attending, book early. Reservations can be made by calling toll-free 877.762.2683 or by email reservations@thecovekelowna.com. For more information, visit www.canadianpallets.com.
Growing Emphasis on Automation Processes and Use of New Technologies

Key Trends That Will Drive the Global Pallet Market

Technavio’s latest report on the global pallet market provides an analysis of the most significant trends expected to impact the market outlook from 2016-2020. Technavio defines an emerging trend as a factor that has the potential to significantly impact the market and contribute to its growth or decline.

According to Technavio transportation and logistics research analysts, the top four emerging trends driving the global pallet market are:

– Greater emphasis on automation processes and use of new technologies
– Vertical integration by companies
– Growing preference for block pallets
– Rise in power of pallet pooling companies

Greater emphasis on automation processes and use of new technologies

Pallet manufacturers rely on automation to boost productivity and raise the capacity of their manufacturing plants. Pallet manufacturers are incorporating sophisticated logistic systems to improve their services.

Ongweoweh is one of the first independent pallet companies to develop tracking software to provide customers with information regarding the pallet movement. Says Sharan Raj, a lead analyst at Technavio for research on warehouse and storage, “Vendors are incorporating tracking technology in pallets, which is driven by the increased need for food safety as they travel through the product distribution system. This trend has also led to an increase in the use of plastic pallets due to the advantage of shipping on plastic pallets, where new tracking technologies can be easily planted on them as compared to other pallets.”

Cont'd on Page 20
Vertical integration by companies

The demand for lumber used for manufacturing pallets is high in the construction and furniture industries. Sawmills are unable to meet the growing demand. As a result of the shortage of lumber in the market, pallet manufacturers find it difficult to complete their orders. Therefore, the supply of raw materials to pallet manufacturers has been adversely affected.

"Pallet manufacturers such as Arrington Lumber (Texas) and Pallet and Associated Pallet (Kentucky) are vertically integrating and investing in logging and sawmills. This enables them to offer high-quality pallets at an economical price. R&E Pallets added a Baker Products processing line to secure raw material supply and boost its production," says Sharan.

Growing preference for block pallets

Large retailers are shifting to block pallets over stringer pallets. Consequently, manufacturers are expected to focus on manufacturing block pallets. Block pallets are expected to account for a large proportion of the market by 2019. Costco and Walmart, two leading retailers in the US, announced their preference for block pallets. This trend is aiding the growth of large pallet poolers such as CHEP and PECO, which only deals in block pallets, and puts small, family-owned, or independent producers in pressure who manufacture stringer pallets.

Rise in power of pallet pooling companies

Pallet rental pools have a significant hold over the pallet market. Walmart and Costco have announced that they will accept pallets only from three large pooling companies. This has had an industry-wide impact and intensified competition in the market. Small firms will have to adapt to the changing business environment and enhance their product specifications to meet the trends in the industry to compete in the market. CHEP alone held 58% of the market share in pallet pooling operations in North America in 2014.
Further Reading

PECO Pallet Names New CEO

RM2 Announces New Logistics Technology Platform

Axios Set to Double Its Pool Size for Egg Pallets

TIMCON Focuses on Recycling and Reuse Obligations

Loscam President Named to Asia Pallet System Fed

Multiple Counterfeit EPAL Loads Seized in Belgium

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Viking Engineering & Development

Upcoming Events


10/11/2016-10/13/2016  NWPCA Fall Plant Tours, Monterrey, California.  www.palletcentral.com

Just in Case...

Click on back issues to catch up!