Product Innovations Continue for the Wall and Ceiling Industry

Virtually all speakers at the 75th Convention of the Association of the Wall and Ceiling Industries - International in Washington agreed that, although the industry continues to face a difficult recession, product innovations from the suppliers are providing new opportunities for contractors. In the past several months suppliers have released a bounty of new products, many of which were on display for the first time at AWCI’s wall and ceiling exposition, a highlight of the convention. Such innovations include:

--New tools and systems that allow comerbead to be installed faster (Shorty, Quick-Grip, Clinch-On, Delta Star, Gordon, Metalex, Niles, L.D. Peters, South Lath, Beadex);

--Improved computer software for estimating and project tracking (Advanced Estimating, Estimation, Inc., Concord, Gage Technology, MC2, Tally Systems, Deneb);

--New exterior insulation wall systems, coatings and finishes (Amico, Parex, Simplex, Pleko Products, TEC, Dryvit, Energex, Senergy, Sto, USG, Thor0 System Products);

--Interior waterproof wall panels (Sequentia);

--Sprayed fireproofing (Isolatek);

--A unique cushioned surfacing system that can be used on walkways, playground areas or other uses, opening up an entirely new market for contractors (Polymer Plastics);

--Improved screws and exterior fasteners (IIW-Buildex, Wind-Lock, Demand Products);

-Ceiling cleaning systems and new ceiling systems to widen offerings in that area (Procoat, Von Schroader, Chicago Metallic, USG Interiors);

--Tapeless drywall systems (Solid Products, Inc.);

--Improved fire-rated drywall (U.S. Gypsum, Domtar, Gold Bond, Louisiana Pacific);

--Access panels and doors (Acudor, Karp, Milcor, Elmdoor);

--Spray machines and accessories for spraying textures, EIFS, fireproofing and more (Grace, Essick, Muller, Unisul, Stiffler, Goldblatt, Contractors Consulting Service, Putzmeister, Spray Force, Consulting, Formglas, Architectural Products Manufacturing, Inc.);

--New EIFS tools (Demand Products, Wind-Lock); and much more.

This list is not exhaustive or all-inclusive; it is intended to show that many companies are producing a wide variety of new products in areas that can help contractors.

These innovations will enable contractors to save money by streamlining their operations and making them more efficient; investigate new markets and marketing opportunities as a key to battling the recession; and provide improved services in the market sectors, such as work required by the Americans with Disabilities Act or renovation work, that are predicted to grow in the future.

Suppliers are doing their part to help contractors out of the recession. In this issue and in coming months we will highlight the many new products that are now available to the industry, and we will include articles showing contractors how to take maximum advantage of these new products.

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