hen the phrase “tools of the trade” is used in relation to the wall and ceiling contractor, it means not just a few things but rather a whole range of material items, large and small, that you have to utilize to get your job done.

Therefore, it’s not surprising that a new product overview such as this would cover an entire gamut of different innovations, a whole grab bag of possibilities, from lifts to adhesives, panels to tools, as well as some miscellany that won’t fit neatly into any particular category. So, that said, let’s just dive in and take a quick look at some of the very varied new offerings manufacturers are currently putting on the market-just for you.

Starting with the big things first, let’s take a look at three new lifts.

From the Selina, Calif.-based UpRight, Inc. comes its new Trailer Mounted Boom Lift, the TL49, with an impressive 56

The TL49 from UpRight, Inc.
foot working height. Vice President Frank Scarborough reports that this machine comes in the wake of the very successful launch of the smaller TL33 last year and is a response to customer requests for a larger unit. This one provides an extra 16 feet of working height and more than 27 feet of unrestricted over-reach yet still retains very compact dimensions for towing.

A special feature of this machine is that it is not a self-propelled unit, which means it can be towed behind a truck, or a car, for that matter. Manager of Marketing Communications Megan Sammons reports that these machines were developed in Europe and have been very well-received there and in South America, where fewer self-propelled units are available. Even though that’s not as large a factor here in the United States, Sammons believes the cost savings and compact design will give it appeal here. Even the larger unit can easily pass through standard double doors for indoor work or storage.

Easy panel loading is a key feature on the 2033 scissor lift offered by the Mayville Engineering Company, Mayville, Wis. The worker simply lifts the bar, which is held in place, as one or more panels are loaded onto the lift, while maintaining full guardrail protection. Director of Marketing Ken Zimmer reports that a unique steering geometry allows the inside wheel to turn to a 90-degree angle to the side of the base, allowing for excellent maneuverability. A well-thought-out design permits easy access to the serviceable components and battery compartment, which have to be maintained daily. Operator-friendly innovations include a spacious aluminum deck and 42-inch roll-out extension, a system to help prevent tipovers, and the single-beam scissor that provides superior rigidity.

The new Tail-Gator™ Mobile Forklift from JLG Industries, Inc., York, Pa., also is designed to make the operator’s job easier. Product Manager George Jabre explains that, because the cab sits lower, the operator has to step only 18 inches from the ground, not the usual 36 inches. There’s also about 30 percent more space so that a 225-pound man, fully winter dressed, can sit in the cab comfortably. All the instruments are on the dash right in front of him, instead of off to the right as in many other units. Of special interest is the mechanism that allows the wheels to be tucked beneath the truck so that loading and unloading can be done from one side, which means the operator doesn’t have to turn the machine around or walk to the other side.

Turning from the very large to the very small, here’s an overview of some new adhesives.

John S. Conboy, president, Con•Form International, Inc., St. Louis, Mo., reports his introduction of a new plastic corner
bead tape called Strait•Flex. This is a plastic paper combination, used in irregular off-angle places, such as corners or bays. It consists of a rigid PVC material that prevents a rigid coating that can give straightlines in difficult areas. Yet, though it will not get soft as paper, it adheres like paper and has a similar flexibility. This product, says Conboy, "provides a superior bonding of joint compounds and finished paints and eliminates the common problems of cracking on inside corners."

From Cantech Industries, Inc., Johnson City, Term., comes its new Clipper Tape 4108, a seven-day outdoor masking tape designed to remove clean after up to seven days of exposure to outdoor sunlight. Marketing/Sales Coordinator Gary Grerrar explains that this blue masking tape features a special acrylic adhesive system designed to hold firm yet resist harmful ultraviolet light. “When UV light hits rubber-based tape, it tends to crystallize, to dry off and make the sticking power that
much less,” Grerrar says. “The end result of this tape is a residue-free surface that saves the need for costly clean-ups.” The tape resists sun light exposure both indoors and out.

Tom Pennell, marketing services manager, Pecora Corporation, Harleysville, Pa., reports his company’s introduction of two silicone products. The newest is called 890 Architectural Silicone. “This is an ultra low modulus sealant, which means that there’s more stretch to the joints,” Pennell says. It’s for use on EIFS, in which the mixture is not as strong as for something like concrete. It can be custom color matched for virtually any color.”

Also on hand is Sil-Span, extruded silicone used primarily for EIFS restoration, though it can be used for a number of other applications as well. The advantage to this one says Pennell, “is that where a sealant has failed, you don’t have to cut around the joints, which, if they’re EIFS, can be destroyed. You can just cover the necessary area, with any color and texture to match the substrate.”

continued on page 49
From **Dow Corning Corporation**, Midland, Mich., comes its 756 Silicone Building Sealant, a high-performance, two-part, medium modulus elastometric weatherproofing sealant with surface characteristics that have been modified to promote aesthetic performance. “The sealant does not contribute to long-term residue rundown or fluid streaking on metal panels and reflective glass or to fluid migration discoloration on porous natural stone.”

“In the past, specifiers had to make a trade-off between aesthetics and performance,” says Jill Jankowski, marketing manager. “They might have chosen an organic material to minimize streaking or discoloration only to find that sealant reverting and failing in a few years. Now, with a surface-modified silicone, they can have the 20-year performance typical of silicones and still have excellent aesthetic performance in those situations where they need it.”

Turning from what you’re not supposed to notice to what you are, let’s take a quick look at some panel offerings.

Mary Pappas, marketing communications specialist, **USG Interiors, Inc.**, Chicago, explains that “there are a lot of panels out there that have either a fine or a deep texture, so we’ve come out with some medium-textured panels to fill in the gap, formulated in either regular or firecode version. Also, there has been a trend toward natural-looking materials in the design community, so we have responded to that need too.” USG’s Touchstone panels feature a smooth surface with just a hint of texture. Mosaic panels offer a striking random pattern with the look of a ceramic mosaic. And the Facets panels provide a unique pattern reminiscent of diamonds, suited for critical lighting applications.

Barbara Dennis, marketing manager, **CertainTeed Corporation**, Valley Forge, Pa., reports the introduction of a new vinyl Ironmax, a vinyl soffit from CertainTeed
soffit called Ironmax. “One of the objections to vinyl soffit has been its dished face,” Dennis says. “But the steep angle of our product’s I-beam construction adds lateral as well as vertical rigidity and extra strength, while the advanced locking system assures maximum vinyl-to-vinyl contact for secure application.”

With a double 5-inch design and five-eighths-inch profile height, Ironmax may be used as a vertical siding and for porch ceilings, as well as for roof overhangs. It comes in 11 popular colors. It’s also applicator friendly, typically requiring a nail every 24 inches instead of the usual 16.

Karol Scott, marketing manager, Interfinish, a division of the Chicago Metallic Corporation, says her company is offering a complete metal ceiling tiling system, not just the panels, but the grid as well. “The powder coated painting process makes the product more corrosion resistant,” she says.

The product comes in a variety of standard sizes as well as custom sizes. The
different styles available include those that can lay flat in flush with the grid, or either shallow or steep reveal, as well as snap-in panels so that the grid is concealed.

Turning to the actual tools of the trade, Steve Moss, marketing director for John Wagner Associates, Concord, Calif, speaks of the introduction of the new Superdrive 55, an auto-feed collated screw tool that feeds 50 and 90 strip screws of three-eighths of an inch to two and one-quarter inches. “Drywall is really headed toward collated systems,” he says. “They’re a lot faster, easier to use, eliminate screw waste, provide better depth control for screws and are adaptable to stand-up extension.”

The tools can be used for subfloors, ceilings, decks, any situa-

Super-drive 55 from John Wagner Associates

tion. “They’re great for refraining steel studs,” Moss says. “They’re also the only true one-hand-free operating system available, and this is also the first tool of its kind to break the $100 contractor price per unit.”

continued on page 52
A variety of new or improved components is being offered in the new Diamond Blade line from Hilti Inc., Tulsa, Okla. Some of the major changes include new performance levels of blades for 35 to 72 horsepower walk-behind saws. Its masonry saw blades come with a redesigned diamond matrix that has a 10 percent more usable segment. The improved small diameter blades feature a special matrix formulation that provides a substantially longer blade life, up to five times longer than the previous lines, and at faster cutting speeds.
Tools are also making the news at Aero-Smith, Inc., Phoenix, Ariz. General Manager Les Butler has been offering air-operated tools that drive ballistic point hardened steel pins for attaching foam to concrete, but this month is coming out with another pneumatic tool that applies steel pins for metal-to-metal fastening applications. The 50/65 LH Track to Stud tool is designed for light-gauge metal-to-metal fabrication in assembling track to stud for residential steel-frame building.

“In steel frame operations, the work is typically done with screws, so our method will dramatically speed up the process of fastening vertical studs to horizontal tracks,” Butler says. “This will put it on par with workers who pound nails in wood houses. Up to now, steel people would have to stand around and drive in one screw at a time.” This new product, coupled with the company’s existing sheathing fasteners, will give steel framers a much-needed parity with wood framers, who typically use air-operated tools.

Miscellaneous

Speaking of steel, Timely Industries of Pacoima, Calif, has been offering its prefinished metal and fire-rated door frame to the Western states for some time now, but it’s now being distributed to the rest of the country. “Since the product is prefinished, this eliminates the cost of having to seal the paint.”

The Icynene Insulation System, offered by Icynene Inc., Toronto, Canada, is a one-step thermal envelope that...
simplifies the construction process and ensures a more comfortable and energy-efficient building, says President Graeme Kirkland. “This fits every cavity perfectly and does not allow any air through, which means that the heating and cooling load on the house is reduced by 50 percent,” he says.

Manufactured from an organic material developed from petrochemical products, this two-component system expands as it is installed, adhering to building components. It seals the joints, crevices and gaps between other building materials that can allow air infiltration through walls, floors and ceilings. Kirkland explains that this system “takes the place of building wrap, insulation, vapor barrier, caulking and taping and eliminates the labor-intensive work associated with airtightness detailing when insulating with conventional insulation products.”

High-tech is the byword at Topcon Laser Systems, Inc., Pleasanton, Calif. Marketing Services Manager Dan Hand explains some of his company’s innovative products. These include a
visible beam diode rotating laser. “This incorporates the worlds first smart card, which enables you to capture a laser beam and extend it up to a 180-degree beam sweep.” The system allows you to draw lines and capture alignments in any one of a number of different ways.

Also on hand is the first automatic liquid compensator. The RL-S 1A/S 1 B automatically finds level in the horizontal and vertical positions, and the worlds first automatic plumb finder. You simply place this unit on the floor and it automatically finds the point that is correctly vertical below the laser.

In sum, there’s a grab bag of interesting new products out there. All you need to do is reach in, and grab what you need.

About the Author

Michael J. Major of Port Townsend, Wash., is a free-lance writer for the construction industry.