

Growing through Education and Innovation

by Shawn Callahan



Good news! Business is up, and the benefits of using cold formed steel components in residential and light commercial construction are growing every day.

Strength, efficiency, versatility, fire resistance, pricing stability, and environmental impact all favor steel for home construction. Yes, wood is still the overwhelming market favorite, but more builders are discovering the benefits of steel everyday. It's not all fun and games, but it's an exciting place to be.

Our growth the past four years has been encouraging, but the key to continued market penetration is education. Our approach is simple: (1) keep innovating and (2) keep telling our story. We keep telling the story about the benefits of our light gauge steel products, and we keep innovating with new products builders need. A great example of this kind of innovation is our newest product, *throughSPAN*[™].

The initial launch of *throughSPAN*[™] is the result of several years of cooperative R & D between Metwood and MarinoWare. Applying Metwood's patented *SPANtechnologies*[™] to MARINOWARE's JoistRite results in a hybrid internally reinforced structural beam that allows builders to run utilities right through the web.



throughSPAN[™]

There were a number of hurdles in making this happen, but Marinoware pulled out the stops and gave us a product that matched the specifications we needed.

Get more details on page 2 in our interview with Scott Stewart, Marinoware's FrameRite Product Manager. Find

out more about the six major benefits of using Metwood for residential and light commercial construction, visit www.metwood.com/benefits.

Metwood Welcomes Lezzer Lumber

It is our pleasure to welcome the Lezzer Lumber Company, headquartered in Curwensville, PA, as Metwood Dealers. Al Smith, Metwood National Sales Manager comments, "Lezzer is the perfect Dealer for us. Not just because their sales exceed 100 million annually, although that's a good thing, but because they know how to move innovative products to their customer base." We conducted an interview with K.C. Lezzer, General Manager of Lezzer Lumber Company:



MTWD: Can you tell us about Lezzer Lumber?



KC: Our roots go back three generations in my family, all the way to 1927. Back then we were selling farm equipment as well as lumber. The farm equipment is no longer with us, but today we have eight stores, two truss and wall panel shops, a commercial door shop, an interior door shop, and an insulation

company. A lot has changed, but some things haven't. Even though we've grown to over four hundred employees, we still feel like we serve our communities as a family. That works for us.

MTWD: How did you find out about Metwood?

KC: We had worked with Al Smith before and when he joined Metwood, he came by and showed us the product line. It looked like he really had something.

MTWD: How are things going so far?

KC: It is going well. We're currently stocking Square

Upcoming Shows

6/8 - 6/10 -Booth 1028
Southern Building Show 2006
Atlanta, GA Booth 1028

8/24 - 8/25
21st Century Building Expo
Charlotte, NC

9/15 - 9/17
Southern Ideal Home Show
Charlotte, North Carolina

9/16 - 9/17 -Booth 606
Home Solutions Expo
Salem Civic Center

9/22 - 9/24
Home & Remodeling Expo
Dulles Expo Center, Chantilly, VA

10/3 - 10/5 - Booth 803
Metalcon International
Tampa Convention Center, FL

10/25
Greater Washington Builders Expo
Dulles Expo Center, Chantilly, VA

11/2 - 11/4 -Booth 728
Architectural Exchange East
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Columns and Joist Reinforcers, and both are very solid products. We've been moving some Reinforcers already. We get quite a few calls because of bad cuts in Joists and it's really a problem, so it's great to finally have a simple repair for that. We're just getting started, but we're excited about the possibilities.

MTWD: What do you think about the *floorSPAN™* system?

KC: We have a lot of sloped lots in PA, and the system can also be used for decks, so we see great possibilities for *floorSPAN™*. We have several systems out for bid already. It's going to take a while before things really kick in, but these are good indications.

MTWD: What is your biggest challenge in bringing in a new product line?

KC: Without question, the challenge is education. Our outside sales people are expected to know our products from the sill up, and that's a lot of products. We just finished up our Metwood product training with AI a couple of weeks ago; now we begin the process of getting the information to our customers.

MTWD: There are all kinds of benefits to using steel components in residential construction. As a builder, when you look at a *throughSPAN™* beam you have to just go, "wow, I need that." Do you have any thoughts about using steel in residential building?

KC: The benefits are really obvious and builders definitely need these products. Again, it's an educational process. You can have the greatest product in the world, with all kinds of benefits, but if your customers don't have the information, you're dead in the water. This places the responsibility on everyone in the supply chain to educate, train, and get the word out. Between residential and commercial, only a small percentage of our sales is steel, so the only way to go is up. With products like these, that is an exciting position to be in!

Thank you for taking the time to speak with us, K.C. We're looking forward to great things from our new friends in Pennsylvania. Keep up the good work!

Project Spotlight: Southern Heritage

When manufactured home builder Southern Heritage, of Rocky Mount, VA received an order for ten modular homes built to stringent fire retardant specs, they called Metwood.

"We build homes in a factory environment on an assembly line," said Plant Manager, Jason. "There's no time for a learning curve and it's difficult to introduce a major change for a short run without running into problems. A bottleneck affects the entire line."

"The good news is, it didn't cause a bottleneck," said Jason. "Everything just kept moving. The only difference was the type of screws we used for our



auto-loading screw-guns. Metwood's Framing System allowed us to meet our production schedule and the fire specs. I guess if you can do that in a manufactured home environment, doing it on a custom built home should be a piece of cake."

Engineering Review with Reini Schuster

When it comes to light gauge steel engineering, no name is quite as famous as that of Reinholdt Schuster, or "Reini" as he likes to be called. Reini is an engineering consultant to Metwood on beam technology and testing. He is working closely with Metwood engineers to achieve ICC approval for the entire *SPANtechnologies™* product line.

We caught up with Reini at Virginia Tech's beam testing facility in Blacksburg, Virginia, where he and Mike Callahan were coordinating tests on several *SPANtechnologies™* Beams:



Reini: This is an exciting product. Light gauge steel products of this type are cutting edge. They represent improvement in so many ways it's hard to know where to begin. Strength, cost, weight, versatility, flammability, and sustainability; we could discuss any one of these topics all day.

There is some resistance to using steel among residential builders. I believe this is due to several myths that are now being brought to light. When you think of steel, you don't think of hammers and nails, but rivets, cutting torches, and cranes. But in fact, light gauge steel can be cut with a circular saw and fastened with screws. Once builders get past this stigma they find there is a world of opportunity in products like these.

MTWD: We understand that you are working with Metwood toward ICC approval for several products. Can you tell us about that?

Reini: I've been working to develop new load charts for the *truSPAN™*

and **throughSPAN™** beams prior to moving forward with ICC applications. The testing we're doing here today is to confirm our calculations for new load tables. What is particularly gratifying is that our tests are confirming our calculations, and providing information we need to take the next steps.

MN: What is the importance of ICC approval?

Reini: Currently, each project must be stamped with an engineers seal. Of course the beams have already been approved by a structural engineer. Our engineers must be certified to provide these seals in each state where products are used. This is time consuming and expensive. Many barriers for usage and marketing will be removed once we prove compliance with ICC standards. It's only a matter of time really.

Thank you, Reini. We'll be checking in from time to time to get an update on the progress toward ICC approval. Visit www.metwood.com for the latest news.

Interview: Scott Stewart of MarinoWare

MTWD: Would you tell us a little about yourself, and how you ended up at MarinoWare?

Scott: I'm a 1983 graduate of James Madison University, with a B.F. in Political Science and Business Administration. I'm a journeyman carpenter by trade, and attained most of my experience from my family. I started working in carpentry when I was about six. I was working in New York as a carpenter several years ago, and heard that Marino

Industries was looking for a Sales Representative. I applied for the job, and eventually became the Sales Representative for Marino Industries. In 1993 Marino and Ware Industries merged. Today, they are one of the largest manufacturers of lightweight steel framing, and most trusted design consultants in the U.S.

MTWD: Your company is a leader in light gauge steel building products, where do you see light gauge heading?

Scott: Marinoware's steel products are great for residential and commercial building, but the practical applications for steel in residential are just being discovered. We're on the cusp of something great here. Historically, steel has maintained a relatively stable price, while the cost and availability of wood has fluctuated substantially. So, while typically it was cost and availability that drove builders to seek alternative products, the real benefits have been largely overlooked. That is, until now. What really makes steel the better choice is strength, durability, versatility, resistance to deterioration, and more. For instance, while wood is sometimes scarce and has little practicality for recycling, steel can be recycled at an 80% ratio. In fact, Marinoware is a certified Green Building Corporation, and 67% of our product is made from recycled material.

MTWD: How did MarinoWare begin working with Metwood?

Scott: The collaboration between MarinoWare and Metwood began about three years ago when we met by chance at a tradeshow. We had something unique in JoistRITE, our floor joist that allows the passage of utilities through the joist. We began discussing the possibility of ap-

throughSPAN™ by Metwood

Introducing the newest member of the **SPANtechnologies™** family of products by Metwood; **throughSPAN™** internally reinforced structural beams allow the passage of electrical, plumbing, and HVAC right through the beam. **throughSPAN™** offers a stronger, lighter, more versatile solution that fastens with screws and cuts with a circular saw.

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plying Metwood's patented **SPANtechnologies™** to JoistRITE. That led to some initial engineering and field-testing, and eventually, work on manufacturing that would support Metwood's technology".

Because Metwood's needs were different than the rest of the market, we needed to make modifications to our manufacturing process to accommodate a different hole pattern and spacing. It took some time to work everything out, but the concept has come full circle and the results are really remarkable: the *throughSPAN™* Beam. Another by-product of the partnership was a major improvement in strength to weight ratio. We've been able to maintain the strength of a standard "C" while reducing the weight by 40%. This makes a product that is simply a dream to work with.

MTWD: How do you see the partnership between MarinoWare and Metwood evolving?

Scott: The possibilities are incredible. We have great synergy between both companies and it's a win win situation. Applying Metwood's **SPANtechnologies™** with JoistRITE has given us an incredibly strong support system with the ability to span fifty feet with no intermediate support, and we're working on going even farther. In a very short period of time Metwood has become one of the top 20 purchasers of JoistRite.

Thanks Scott, we're looking forward to seeing more from this unique partnership in the future. Keep up the great work.

METWOOD Engineering Expansion Completed

With office space in short supply, the home office and engineering offices have been bursting at the seams for several years. Office, Support, and Engineering staff leaped into the new space almost as soon as the paint was

dry. It's a great environment to work in and now everyone has plenty of room, which makes it more efficient. Of course *truSPAN™* beams were used throughout, and the second floor engineering offices and conference area sit on a *floorSPAN* cement pourover. The ceiling was left open to showcase the Metwood products used in the project.



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Craig McDonald

Product Specialist Headers, Girders, *floorSPAN™*, *deckSPAN™*, and **REINFORCERtechnologies™**. Dealer, Distributor and Contractor Sales



CONGRATULATIONS

to Shawn and Kelly Callahan, who are celebrating their ten-year anniversary this coming July 13th. This May we also celebrated Shawn's ten-year anniversary with Metwood.

