

WMMA to Display a Show of Force at LIGNA 2015

Hannover. The Wood Machinery Manufacturers of America (WMMA) will continue its time-honored tradition of organizing an exhibition pavilion when LIGNA plays host to the global woodworking community, May 11-15, 2015 in Hannover, Germany.

For five days, the Hannover Fairgrounds will be transformed into the world's largest showcase of woodworking machinery, cutting tools and accessories. The fair also will serve as a launching pad for innovative woodworking technologies and cutting-edge manufacturing solutions.

If recent history is any indication, then North America will be well represented at LIGNA 2015. A record 3,000 plus North American woodworking professionals were among the more than 90,000 visitors representing 100 countries that attended LIGNA 2013.



Woodworkers from around the globe visiting this year's fair will find a diverse sampling of North American suppliers displaying their wares. Many of them are members of the WMMA, a U.S. trade association representing more than 200 North American manufacturers and suppliers of woodworking machinery and supplies.

As has been the case since 2003, the WMMA's presence at LIGNA will be anchored by a pavilion, making it convenient for woodworking attendees to talk shop with

a wide array of product specialists. Many other member companies will either exhibit on their own or with one of their European distributors. Still other WMMA members will walk the show in search of new product lines to represent in North America and to see and learn what's new.

'Tremendous Forum for Introductions'

"For companies who would otherwise have a very small presence at such a large show, the WMMA Pavilion provides a larger footprint," said Fred Stringfellow, executive director of the WMMA. "Many WMMA members that exhibit at LIGNA, inside or outside our pavilion, are seeking international distributors for their machinery and supplies. LIGNA provides a tremendous forum for introductions of this kind."

John Schultz, immediate past president of the WMMA and owner of Super Thin Saws of Waterbury, VT, said his company will participate in the WMMA Pavilion for at least the fifth time, ready to discuss the benefits of its "eye-catchingly different" thin saw blades.

Schultz said every woodworker worth his sawdust should add a trip to LIGNA to his bucket list.

"Everyone in the industry would really enjoy this show. You have to weigh travel costs, of course, but

even if you can only swing it once a decade, go! There's a staggering amount of new stuff each year including prototypes. I find the new concepts very exciting."

"LIGNA allows us to expand our brand awareness through the world and find new international dealers," said John Branch, vice president of Mereen-Johnson of Minneapolis, MN. Branch, who is gearing up for his seventh LIGNA, will help man the WMMA Pavilion ready to talk about his company's rip-saws, optimizing and panel sizing systems.

When he's not working the WMMA Pavilion, Branch said he looks forward to walking the show. "The amount of machinery that is displayed and running is amazing. It is worth the trip for any woodworker just to come and see all the different machinery for new ideas on how you could improve your factory."

Brian Donohue, president of Safety Speed Manufacturing of Ham Lake, MN, said his company has exhibited at LIGNA for more than 20 years and has long since "graduated beyond the WMMA Pavilion." Safety Speed will display vertical panel saws and routers in tandem with Vynkier Machine, its France-based European distributor. "LIGNA is the central meeting point for the world. We get to meet with our dealers from all over the world, most of which we recruited at LIGNA. I hope to recruit more this year."

Veterans and Rookies Look Forward to LIGNA

Jim Laster, executive vice president of Newman Machine of Browns Summit, NC, is a veteran among LIGNA veterans. He has attended LIGNA since the mid-1970s. Newman's booth at this year's LIGNA will be in close proximity to the WMMA Pavilion. The company will introduce its SLB3004 stationary log box with movable cutter heads and display several other machines.

"Prior to having our own stand we would send two or three people to walk the show and see what technologies were coming out. In 1991, we had our first stand and have exhibited at the show ever since.

"We market to any country doing woodworking on a large commercial scale and LIGNA draws most of our international customers as well as many of our domestic U.S. customers," Laster added. "Since the show spans the full week, visitors tend to take more time to really visit. We frequently tell our customers that they should go to LIGNA to see what the world is doing with woodworking machinery."

In sharp contrast to Laster, Alvaro Orozco, director of international sales for U*C Coatings of Buffalo, NY, will be attending his first LIGNA. The company, which has exhibited at several past LIGNA fairs, is best known for its Anchorseal wax emulsion end sealer.

"I'm looking forward to the opportunity of connecting with people from all over the world who are in the industry and finding new potential distributors for our products. I've heard it's the biggest show of all so it seems like the perfect opportunity for us to get our name out there."

By his count, Darriel Miller, distribution manager for Wood-Mizer of Indianapolis, IN, has attended at least 10 LIGNAs. Miller chairs the WMMA's International Business Development Committee, devoted to helping members identify strategic export opportunities. LIGNA stands front and center of those efforts.

“The whole world is represented at LIGNA and all of the latest and greatest technologies are there,” Miller said. “Woodworkers need to attend LIGNA to broaden their scope.”

For more information about participating in the WMMA Pavilion at LIGNA, contact Fred Stringfellow, executive director, 443.640.1052 x 102; fred@wmma.org.