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BuildSteel Releases e-Book to Help Building Professionals Meet Project Goals with Cold-Formed Steel Trusses

BuildSteel, a partnership of steel and construction industry organizations, announced the release of "Cold-Formed Steel Trusses: Design, Performance, and Advantages," a complimentary e-book to help building owners, architects, contractors and engineers better understand how cold-formed steel (CFS) truss systems can help them in their next project. [More](#)

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Before we begin the new year, let's take a look back at some of 2017's accomplishments:

- The SFA and its member companies continued to deliver learning units and professional development hours to the construction marketplace. With more than 263 requests for some type of continuing education seminar, the SFA filled each one thanks to the generous volunteer efforts of many members. From coast to coast and north to south, our team of dedicated experts conveyed the best practices of the material of choice – cold-formed steel. The venues included regional building code conferences like the ICC Region III, Commonwealth of Virginia, Johnson County, 17 Structural Engineers Associations and many architecture offices, just to name a few.
- In 2017, SFA issued more than 14,300 professional development hours and learning units of continuing education to more than 3,140 construction professionals. Working with our partners (like MBMA, with whom we conducted one webinar this year), that number continues to grow. While many of the requests are generated through press releases that we send, most result from calls to 1-800-79-STEEL. SFA then matches the request with its network of trained presenters to deliver quality educational opportunities about cold-formed steel. SFA maintains continuing education provider status with the American Institute of Architects and several state engineering boards. Our registered programs fulfill necessary continuing education requirements for design and construction professionals throughout the world.

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- Along with our industry technical experts, we responded to more than 3,720 inquiries for assistance with everything from sourcing cold-formed steel material for projects to design assistance and questions about support and training. Special thanks to Roger LaBoube, Don Allen, Jeff Klaiman, Danny Feazell, Paul Dalia, Jay Larson, and George Frater, to name a few, who assisted with many of the inquiries, special thanks as well to Debbie Bennett for keeping our messages to the public timely.
- At the ASTM – E60 Committee, we successfully staved off an attempt by the Biodiesel industry to change the definition of the term “recycle” and their attempt to claim that they recycle in the Recycling in LCA ASTM work item—a big accomplishment!
- With the assistance of Jim DesLaurier, Michael Kerner, Adam Shoemaker, Fernando Sesma, John Rice and George Frater, the Steel Framing Alliance published the 2017 edition of *A Guide to Fire and Acoustic Data for Cold-Formed Steel Floor, Wall and Roof Assemblies*.

Finally, as 2017 ends, the staff at the Steel Framing Alliance and Cold-Formed Steel Engineers Institute wish to thank all who have made the work of our organizations possible through their generous contributions of time, energy and talent as well as their financial contributions. We wish you wonderful things and continued success in 2018.

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The opening night experience will be dinner at the Maritime Museum docked on the San Diego Bay, along with a few surprises.

The Expo never disappoints and is filled with more than 15 educational opportunities for engineers, architects, contractors, building code officials and inspectors alike. While you can't go west and ignore seismic issues, we are bringing back by popular demand the Cold-Formed Steel Classroom featuring Dr. Roger LaBoube and the Design Forum Panel discussion.

If you would like to sponsor and exhibit or speak at the conference, please contact conference@cfsei.org.

Registration is now available at <http://www.cfsei.org/2018-cfsei-expo>

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2018 starts with a bang with the first of the CFSEI Webinar Series, "Avoiding Change Orders," on February 22, 2018, presented by Don Allen, P.E., Director of Engineering for Super Stud Building Products.

Change orders are wonderful if they can get you more money and profit on a job, but they're terrible if you have to pay for them. Either way, they are not usually budgeted, and can ruin budgets for owners and contractors. So.....what are the issues that lead to change orders? Knowing where they usually happen can be a big first step. This webinar will show you where the roots of change orders begin in the contract language and contract documents, and what you can do about them.

Register now at <http://www.cfsei.org/webinar-february-22-2018>.

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Steel Industry Releases Guide to LEED v4

The Steel Market Development Institute (SMDI) has released a guide to using steel construction products for the latest version of the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building certification program. The guide, "LEED v4 for Steel Products Used in Construction Applications," will help construction professionals understand how steel products can earn points toward LEED v4 certification.

"A rapidly-evolving green building industry and increasing demand for sustainability have led to a number of updates and a more rigorous certification process in LEED v4," said Mark Thimons, Vice President, Sustainability for SMDI. "The new process places an increased focus on material and resource transparency. This new guide for steel construction products will help builders leverage steel's sustainability benefits to meet their certification goals."

Steel has always been well-positioned for credits in categories like recycled content, but LEED v4 offers even more opportunities to earn credits for steel use, across a range of categories, such as:

Materials and Resources

Steel-intensive design truly excels in this category, which focuses on minimizing the embodied energy and other impacts associated with the extraction, processing, transport, maintenance and disposal of building materials. The requirements are designed to support a life-cycle approach that improves performance and promotes resource efficiency.

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Energy and Atmosphere

This category approaches energy from a holistic perspective, addressing energy use reduction, energy-efficient design strategies and renewable energy sources. Steel framing can provide the building block for truly energy-efficient designs, while steel cladding products can help create exceptionally tight building envelopes. Additionally, steel roofing provides an excellent platform for photovoltaic systems to earn Energy and Atmosphere credits.

Sustainable Sites

Construction professionals can earn Sustainable Sites points by using steel roofing products to reduce heat island effects and prefabricated steel products to reduce onsite construction times.

The guide is available for download at
www.steelsustainability.org/construction/leedv4.aspx.

Source: Steel Market Development Institute, November 9, 2017

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2018 Construction Industry Economic Outlook

As we head into the final month of 2017, we're going to take a look at how the construction industry has fared this year and what we can expect for 2018. These forecasts were presented in the 2018 Construction and Design Outlook: Cheery or Dreary? webcast presented by ConstructConnect, the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) and the American Institute of Architects (AIA).

In addition to looking at what economists Alex Carrick, ConstructConnect; Kermit Baker, AIA; and Ken Simonson, AGC have to say about the outlook for 2018, we'll also take a look at some of the obstacles and opportunities the construction industry will face next year in the form of possible tax reforms and labor shortages.

2017 Construction Starts & Spending Forecast

While 2017 is shaping up to be a great year for construction, we aren't going to be seeing the type of year-over-year growth in starts and spending we've had over the past couple of years.

In 2016, total construction spending increased 6.5% from the previous year according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau. In 2014 construction spending was up nearly 11% and in 2015 it increased 10.7%.

Ken Simonson with the AGC is forecasting a moderate increase of 3% to 5% for construction spending in 2017. This is being led by a 7% to 9% increase in private residential construction spending. Construction spending is being hurt by public spending which Simonson expects to decrease by 4% to 6% in 2017.

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The AIA's Consensus Construction Forecast Panel has construction spending on nonresidential buildings increasing 3.8%. Commercial construction spending is expected to see an 8.8% increase for the year while Industrial construction spending is going to see a year-over-year decrease of 6.6%.

Construction spending through the first nine months of 2017 totaled \$917.0 billion, a 4.3% increase over the same period in 2016. Unless something crazy happens during this last quarter, the forecast from the experts should be right on target.

ConstructConnect's construction starts increased 13.2% from 2015 to 2016.

Construction starts saw a 13.6% increase in 2015. ConstructConnect's forecast for construction starts in 2017 is a 7.9% growth over 2016 to \$737.8 billion.

2018 Construction Starts & Spending Forecast

Construction spending and starts are expected to remain strong in 2018, but again the amount of growth is forecast to be a bit more subdued.

ConstructConnect's construction starts forecast for 2018 is a 4.8% increase to \$773.1 billion. Commercial construction (offices, parking garages and transportation terminals) is expected to have a 12.4% increase in starts next year with conservative growth out through 2021.

Industrial, which includes manufacturing facilities and warehouses, is expected to see a 5.6% decrease in starts in 2018 after seeing a 22.8% increase in 2017. Retail construction starts are expected to decline another 2.8% in 2018 after experiencing a 16.5% drop in 2017.

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Ken Simonson has forecast a 2% to 7% increase in construction spending for 2018. Private residential will again see the most growth at 6% to 9% with private nonresidential coming in at an increase between 1% and 5%. The biggest uncertainty, according to Simonson, will be with public construction spending which he has forecast as declining by as much as 3% to growing up to 3% in 2018.

The AIA's Consensus Construction Forecast Panel for nonresidential buildings construction spending growing 3.6% in 2018. Commercial construction spending should expect about a 4.0% increase, less than half the growth forecast for this year. Institutional construction should see about a 5.8% increase next year with Institutional only increasing by 1.1% in 2018.

Winners & Losers

Residential construction, especially single-family construction, should remain strong in 2018. Part of this will be contingent on whether millennials decide to start making the move from living in downtown metropolitan areas to becoming homeowners.

"If millennials decide they want to have single-family housing like their parents and grandparents, it will help to drive residential starts," said Alex Carrick.

We've had 10 years when housing starts have been less than the 1.4 million benchmark that represents equilibrium," added Carrick. "So, if housing ever really gets going, it's going to drive the economy for years to come."

Other areas where we are expected to expect to see growth include stadiums and arenas with new NFL stadiums planned in Los Angeles and Las Vegas as well as expansion of Major League Soccer in Miami and other cities in the coming years.

Lodging construction, including hotels and motels, is expected to be down in 2018 after experiencing growth in 2017.

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Public construction has declined in 2017, but could get back into positive territory with airport construction, which should experience a lot of expansion in terminals and runways, as well as public education construction spending. Spending on highway construction is a big question mark as federal spending remains flat but states are continuing to pursue increases in gas taxes and public-private partnerships (P3s) to fund local road construction.

Retail construction will continue to decline in 2018 as “the bricks and mortar section of retail has really been suffering of late,” according to Carrick. Because of e-commerce, warehouse construction should continue to remain strong and grow in the coming years.

The outlook for the construction industry in 2018 is positive if we look at how architecture firms have been performing this year. “Design firms are seeing healthy conditions [which] certainly points to continued growth in construction as we move into 2018,” stated Kermit Baker.

Obstacles & Opportunities

“Construction labor looks to be a stubborn problem to resolve,” noted Kermit Baker.

Labor shortages will continue to plague the construction industry in 2018 and the years to come.

“Construction employment is still more than 10% below its previous peak,” according to Ken Simonson. “Seventy percent of firms said they were having trouble filling hourly craft positions.”

More than half the firms polled by the AGC stated they are having difficulty filling positions for carpenters, plumbers, concrete workers, electricians and bricklayers.

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Tax reform is another issue that could impact the construction industry in 2018. On the nonresidential side, the proposed tax reforms could create favorable business conditions that would encourage investments in construction.

“Lowering of the corporate tax rate from 35% to 20% in the hope that it would stimulate more manufacturing, more manufacturing activity,” would be a positive according to Carrick.

For housing, the proposed tax reforms could reduce the value of mortgage interest and local property tax deductions, which would be bad for the single-family residential market.

Recent natural disasters, such as the wildfires in California and Hurricanes Irma and Maris, could play a positive role on the construction industry in the coming years. Rebuilding efforts in areas affected by these natural disasters should have a positive impact on the construction industry in the years to come.

Along with labor constraints, commodities and materials pricing will continue to have an impact on the construction industry in 2018 and the years to come. As materials and commodities prices continue to rise, it will be interesting to see if construction firms continue to make do with lower profit margins or if they attempt to increase building costs to meet demand.

Source: *constructconnect*, November 30, 2017

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Construction Numbers Stagnant in Otherwise Positive October Jobs Report, Says ABC

WASHINGTON, Nov. 3—According to an Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) analysis of data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics today, the nation's construction sector added 11,000 net new jobs in October, matching the revised total from September. Nonresidential construction employment, however, experienced a net decline of 2,000 jobs. The residential sector added approximately 13,000 net new jobs.

The construction industry unemployment rate, which is available only on a nonseasonally adjusted basis, fell two-tenths of a percentage point and stands at 4.5 percent. The official rate of national unemployment fell yet again, this time to 4.1 percent. Last month's employment report, which indicated that the nation lost 33,000 jobs in September, was revised upward to a positive 18,000 net new jobs. This means that the nation's streak of adding jobs each month has stretched beyond seven years. The nation is estimated to have added a total of 261,000 net new jobs in October. However, consensus estimates had suggested that more than 300,000 jobs were created in October, which means today's report fell short of expectations.

"Since 2015, the pace of monthly job growth has been edging lower in America," said ABC Chief Economist Anirban Basu. "This has not been attributable to falling demand for human capital, but rather expanding difficulty filling available jobs. The situation has become especially acute in nonresidential construction, as a large number of experienced construction workers head for retirement or perhaps for less demanding industries. A lack of ready and willing entrants into the construction workforce remains a source of intense frustration and growing alarm.

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“In other words, the relatively small decline in nonresidential construction jobs in October cannot simply be interpreted as an indication that industry activity has slipped,” said Basu. “That is one possible explanation, but another is that demographics and other factors are countervailing efforts to replace departing workers. The construction unemployment rate is now well below 5 percent. Still another explanation is that October’s job loss is due to construction projects stalled by recent storms. That said, one cannot fully discount the notion that demand for human capital among nonresidential construction firms has slipped a bit given recent industry spending data that have been trending lower of late.

“Discerning the correct explanation is important. If October’s industry job loss was due merely to the dislocating impacts of storms, industry employment is likely to bounce back forcefully in upcoming months as rebuilding activities become more apparent,” said Basu. “However, if this is due to a loss of demand for workers as the construction cycle enters a new phase or if this is due to workforce demographics, employment growth will remain soft. In any case, the industry must continue to strive to expand industry labor force participation if the industry is to increase productivity and profitability.”

Construction Employment Statistics: October 2017

	October 2017	September 2017	October 2016	1-Month Net Change	12-Month Net Change	12-month % Change
Construction	6,930,000	6,919,000	6,743,000	11,000	187,000	2.8%
Residential Building	766,600	759,400	749,400	7,200	17,200	2.3%
Nonresidential Building	764,300	767,600	751,300	(3,300)	13,000	1.7%
Heavy & Civil Engineering	970,000	973,000	946,400	(3,000)	23,600	2.5%
Residential Specialty Trade Contractors	1,949,900	1,943,800	1,868,600	6,100	81,300	4.4%
Nonresidential Specialty Trade Contractors	2,479,400	2,475,100	2,426,900	4,300	52,500	2.2%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

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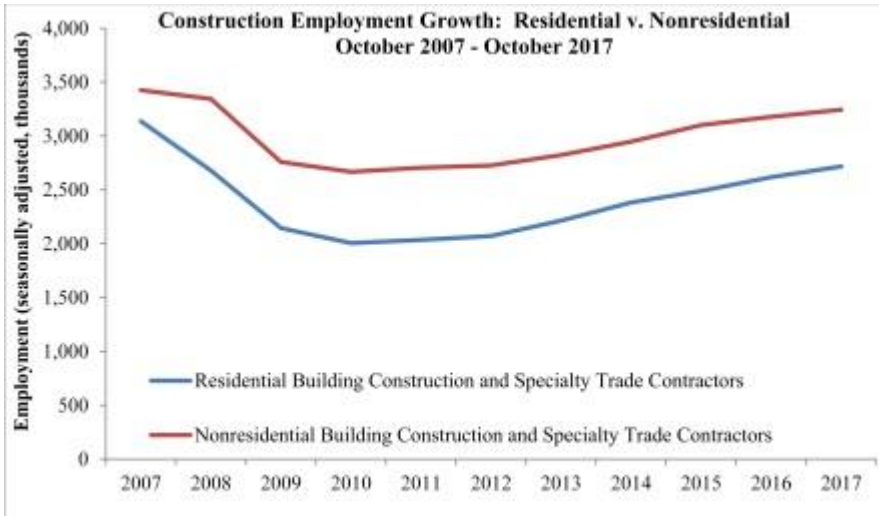
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Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Source: Associated Builders and Contractors, November 3, 2017

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HEADQUARTERS

Steel Framing Alliance
25 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Suite 800
Washington, DC 20001
Tel: 800-797-8335

NEW MEMBERS

- Envelope Design-Build
- Evans Engineering, Inc.
- Klingner & Associates PC
- Lance Engineering, LLC
- Mako Steel, Inc.
- PACE Group LLC
- SilverWood steel Framing, Inc
- The Raymond Group

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 22, 2018

Change Orders and Cold-Formed
Steel Webinar

3:00 p.m. Eastern Time

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May 15-16, 2018

CFSEI Annual Expo
San Diego, CA

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MARKETPLACE

BuildSteel Releases e-Book to Help Building Professionals Meet Project Goals with Cold-Formed Steel Trusses

WASHINGTON, D.C. – BuildSteel, a partnership of steel and construction industry organizations, announced the release of “Cold-Formed Steel Trusses: Design, Performance, and Advantages,” a complimentary e-book to help building owners, architects, contractors and engineers better understand how cold-formed steel (CFS) truss systems can help them in their next project.

“Cold-formed steel trusses are among the most efficient systems for use in non-residential and multi-family construction,” said Dan Snyder, director of BuildSteel. “In a competitive marketplace, CFS trusses provide a cost-effective option to help differentiate projects, deliver value and meet project goals.”

Within the e-book, building professionals will learn:

- Why multi-family and mid-rise projects benefit from CFS trusses
- How CFS trusses help solve complex challenges and support design flexibility
- How CFS truss systems deliver on performance and lifecycle savings

“Cold-Formed Steel Trusses: Design, Performance, and Advantages” can be downloaded at <http://www.buildsteel.org/ebook-cold-formed-steel-trusses-design-performance-and-advantages/>.

For more information about BuildSteel, to request complimentary project assistance, or to sign up for the latest information and resources in cold-formed steel framing, visit <http://www.buildsteel.org>.

Source: BuildSteel, October 23, 2017

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