Reflections on the Growth of World of Concrete and ASCC

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ASCC Board

WORLD OF CONCRETE CELEBRATES 30TH ANNIVERSARY

The World of Concrete turns 30 this year. Some of you may remember the early days of what is now the largest annual concrete trade show in the U.S. Conceived in 1974 by visionaries at Concrete Construction magazine, the American Society for Concrete Construction, and the American Concrete Pumping Association, the first World of Concrete was announced late that year. Held in Houston, Texas, with inside and outside exhibits covering 75,000 square feet, it was described as an event at which “concrete constructors from throughout the English-speaking world will convene for an industry-wide trade show and series of seminars programmed for the specific interests of those who build with concrete.”

The Portland Cement Association and American Concrete Institute provided input for six-hour, morning seminars covering concrete pumping, floor construction, and effective management. Afternoon workshop topics were architectural concrete, data processing, and human engineering and motivation; and construction demonstrations featured vacuum dewatering of slabs, laser surveying equipment, and high-temperature lances for concrete cutting.

This initial event was a modest success, bringing together 1500 people from throughout the United States and fourteen other countries. But the concrete community sensed the potential for growth of such a show, and the roll of cosponsors increased as the show grew.

As a faculty member at the University of Missouri-Rolla, I attended WOC ’77 in New Orleans. The show was still in its infancy, but even then the seminar program was impressive, and exhibitors were starting to realize the benefits of participating in an annual event directed specifically at concrete contractors. These exhibitors included Schwing America, Symons Corp., Gomaco, Master Builders, and Sika—all still exhibiting 30 years later. After five years of relatively steady but not phenomenal growth, WOC ’80 in Las Vegas established the World of Concrete as the premier exhibition for the concrete contracting industry. Total attendance exceeded 16,000 and more than 10,000 seminar tickets were sold.

I joined the staff of Concrete Construction Publications Inc. in 1981 and shared responsibility for further development of the seminar program and for planning and executing the live demonstrations. Running the demonstrations was an agonizingly stressful experience, because glitches happened entirely too often. In 1982 we almost plugged the drainage system for the Georgia World Congress Center by pouring excess pump-priming grout into the floor drains. And when in 1986 we demonstrated a tamping screed used for applying dry shakes to flatwork, the concrete set too rapidly and the tamping screed kicked up a big cloud of dust instead of working the dry shake into the surface. In doing the demos, we soon learned to plan for perfection, but settle for “good enough.”

WOC ’87 in Houston marked the debut of the megademos. Bruce Suprenant joined the demo team that year and we planned an ambitious series of demonstrations that included pumping full-size columns from the bottom up, shotcreting on inflated forms, and placing slabs with a self-propelled conveyor. We used more concrete than had ever been placed in the demos, and I made the unfortunate decision to save money by scheduling demolition and removal of all the demo concrete on the evening before the last day of the exhibition—with only two people doing the work. Bruce and I were in the Astrodome until three in the morning using a rock drill, hydraulic (cont. page 2)
splitter, and an end loader to break up and remove concrete columns and slabs. After that harrowing experience, Bruce decided that my ambition was better developed than my judgment and he took over construction management of the megademos. My ulcers immediately started to heal.

The 1988 WOC in Las Vegas set more new records, with attendance exceeding 30,000 and seminar attendance passing the 20,000 mark. Since then records have been broken several more times, with attendance topping 50,000 in 1996, and rising past 70,000 more recently.

The reason for the spectacular growth of this event can be summarized succinctly. The people who made it happen in the beginning—original owners Bill Avery and Dan Anderson, longtime show manager Dan Sladek, seminar manager Susan Clancy, logistics manager Don Marcus, and their incredibly motivated sales and support staffs—viewed the WOC partners as the show’s most valuable assets. Those partners included exhibitors, cosponsors, attendees, seminar speakers, and the people who helped run the demos.

As one of the original partners, ASCC contributed much to the early growth of WOC. It’s worthy of note that many recipients of the ASCC Lifetime Achievement Award had a connection to World of Concrete. Burr Bennett and Mike Lombard were early supporters of the trade show concept, while Bill Avery and Dan Anderson nurtured the show during its early, lean years, then presided over the rapid expansion in the 1980s.

Thank You to Our 2004 Kick-Off Bash Sponsors

PLATINUM ($2000):
- Artcrete, Inc.
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- Concrete Contractors Assoc. of Greater Chicago
- Ruttura & Sons Construction
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- Specialty Concrete Products
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- Vexcon Chemicals

Still Time to Register for
- Kick-Off Bash
- Annual Meeting

Use forms enclosed in this mailing to register.

MEMBER LISTING CORRECTIONS

Please make the following changes to your Membership Directory Supplement.

Advance Outdoor Services
aos@ss.rr.com

Bon Tool Company
4430 Gibsonia Road
Gibsonia, PA 15044
Tel: 724-443-7080
Fax: 724-443-7090
sales@bontool.com
Carl Bongiovanni
John Wight
Metzger/McGuire, Inc.
specmm80@aol.com
Happy New Year to All! The World of Concrete will be here in a few weeks. The DCC board meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 15th from 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. This meeting is open to anyone who would like more information about the Decorative Concrete Council. Please plan to attend.

We need your help manning the ASCC booth and the Artistry in Concrete demonstrations during World of Concrete. We would like at least one DCC representative at the booth throughout the show. Booth duty is only an hour and a half and is a great way to meet people and have fun with other members. Please contact Charlene at Ruttura & Sons (631-454-0291) or me (610-967-5677) for more information. We would appreciate your time.

There are many ASCC committees that would appreciate input from decorative contractors and manufacturers. Participation in ASCC will help both you and your company become a greater force within the concrete industry. Please make the time to become involved and brighten your horizons.

Planning continues for the DCC Spring Fling in San Diego, CA. (Please see page 1). Join us to broaden your networking opportunities and expand your decorative concrete knowledge. This event will be a terrific learning opportunity and great fun. Please call — Bev and I are always available to answer your questions and help in any way we can.

Looking forward to seeing you at the World of Concrete!

Generous Sponsors
For the past three years, ASCC manufacturer members have donated prizes for both the ASCC Giveaway and Kick-Off Bash during the World of Concrete. This year was no exception, as the support was overwhelming. The sponsors are listed in this issue and we thank them for their generosity.

Growing Membership
During the past year, 19 manufacturers joined ASCC. We’re anxious to raise this number and have sent a mailer promoting the association benefits to potential vendor prospects. Any assistance in soliciting new members is appreciated.

Wishing you all a prosperous new year.
Many small or emerging contractors often ask, “Where can I get an effective safety and loss prevention program?” Some think you can simply buy one, set it on a shelf and pull it out occasionally to show regulatory agency personnel or prospective clients. You can, but that won’t get you where you need to go.

There are model safety programs that can be modified or tailored to meet your needs. The key phrase is “tailored to meet your needs.” The American Society of Concrete Contractors (ASCC) has a Safety Manual that can be used as a guide when drafting your safety and loss prevention manual. Your insurance carrier safety and loss prevention personnel may offer guidance and direction as well.

Your safety and loss prevention manual should include:
- A Policy Statement on Safety, Alcohol and Substance Abuse
- Disciplinary Policy
- Clearly Defined Duties and Responsibilities for Safety
- Employee Screening, Selection & Placement
- Safety Rules
- New Employee Orientation & Training
- Inspections, Audits & Observations
- Safety Meetings
- Emergency Reporting & Response
- Access to First Aid & Follow-up Medical Care
- Incident Reporting & Investigation
- Pre-job & Pre-task Planning
- Personal Protective Equipment Requirements
- Fire Prevention & Protection
- Employee Involvement & Participation
- Recordkeeping

In addition, most contractors will need the following topics covered to satisfy specific OSHA requirements:
- Hazard Communication
- Confined Space Entry
- Lockout/Tagout
- Electrical Safety
- Mobile Equipment Operation & Inspection
- Ladder & Scaffold Safety

Successful contractors have a management system to ensure that the three elements of people, equipment and the work environment are properly matched on a daily basis. This management system must be spelled out in your safety and loss prevention manual.

The Management/Leadership System

Don’t forget to use the ASCC Hotlines:

Technical: 800-331-0668
Safety: 866-788-2722