

WOOD INDUSTRY



MARCH/
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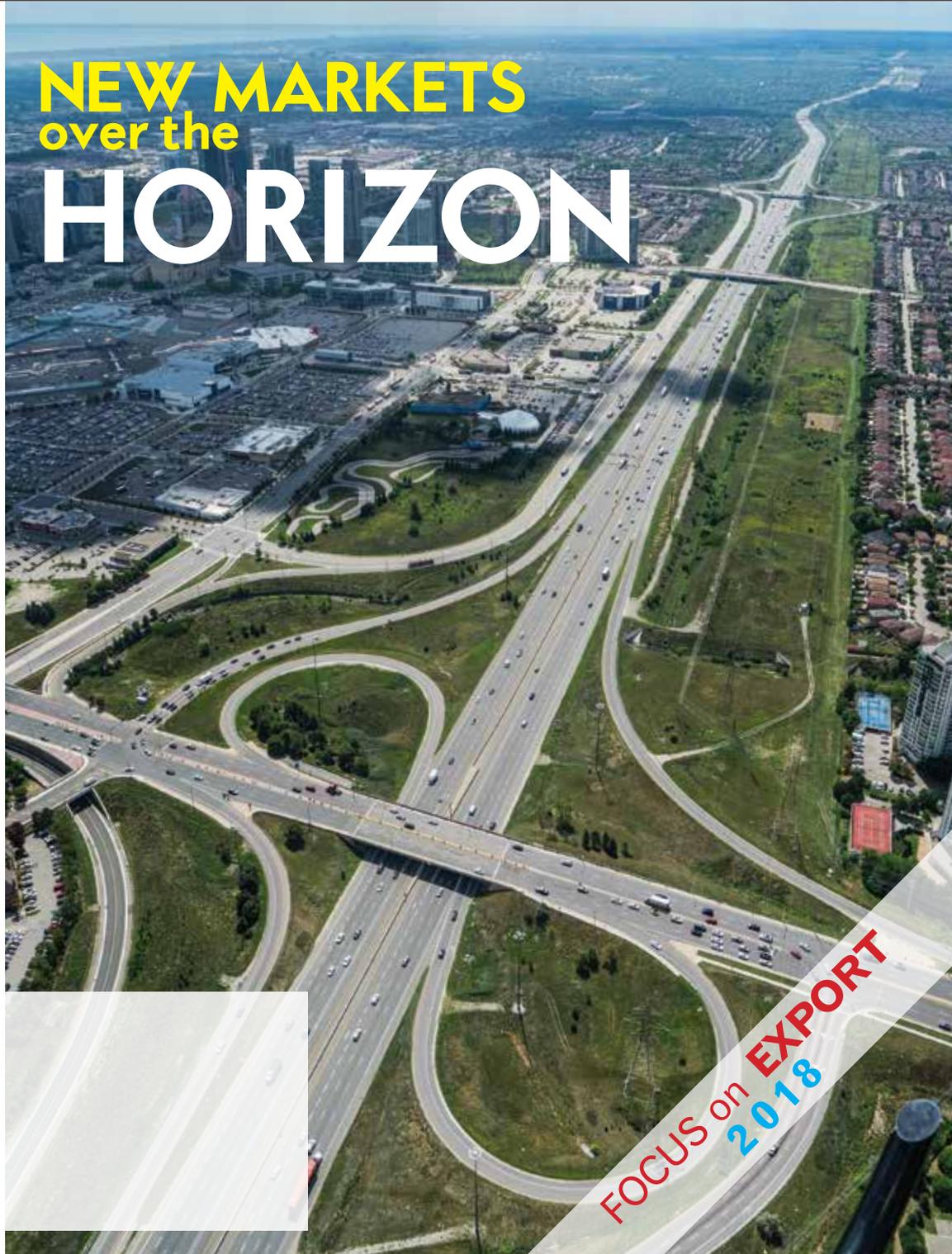
The business side of woodworking



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WOOD INDUSTRY

The business side of woodworking

MARCH/APRIL 2018
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From the editor

Noxious skivvies

There has been a ruling on the formaldehyde issue in the States, and you can read about it on page 24. All parties seem to agree that it's favourable to them, and it should be favourable to us. At minimum, we can now plan and prepare knowing what will be expected.



Kerry Knudsen

In a rare twist, even Shanghai got into the act, seizing a shipment of Victoria's Secret lingerie in September because it had excess levels of formaldehyde. It's odd to hear China being overly concerned about contamination standards.

We hope it's not political. Or fake.

Back to Canada, it's hard to imagine anybody not being positive about the current business outlook. Building permits are in record territory. Housing values are at a peak. Construction, starts, renovation — it's all booming. If you aren't doing something about it, you should at least look around and take a breath. Things may get better, but it's hard to imagine how.

Trudeau and Trump showed off a bit of fancy footwork at the beginning of this month, but it really didn't get a purchase. The contention was over steel and aluminum duties, but at the last moment Trump exempted Canada and Mexico from his tariffs.

Given that, it's hard to imagine that he would suddenly launch a prohibitive tax against wood products. Also, the States' demand for residential wood products will certainly continue to increase, and U.S. production capacity in our sector has lagged demand for decades, with the exception of the period following the Dodd-Frank-inspired depression.

We have long been concerned about the Obama administration's outright use of the Environmental Protection Agency as a weapon against production, and the current administration seems to be rolling much of those unlegislated laws back.

Unlike Chinese underwear, those rules seemed to be nothing other than political. Of all people, it seems to me folks that have a passion for trees and wood products would be more conscious than most when it comes to sustainability and the environment. But then, we also don't tend to be political. We don't care

to mess with other people's dirty laundry.

But, being quiet, we end up getting blamed. I don't need to explain that the wood industry — loggers, in particular — get blamed for denuding every virgin forest in history, with particular attention to wherever we are, plus Africa and the Amazon.

I will grant that loggers are opportunists and will take a dollar where they can find one. However, the "slash-and-burn" technique that is the darling of *Dora the Explorer* and every other cartoon phantasm of the National Geographic Channel is a function of politics. Specifically, politicians' constituents want money. To get money, they need roads, infrastructure, plantations (no pineapples left in Hawaii), and factories. To get those things, those constituents need to convince their politicians, in whatever manner they need to be convinced. Then the politicians become convinced, and the logs have to go.

This is what irks me so badly when we go to Honduras, Costa Rica or other target country. We meet the nicest, most honourable, most cooperative people on earth, and each of them asks me whether there is any way they can get their products to North America. Meanwhile, we absorb and distribute all the cocaine they can transport here, courtesy of their politicians.

Did you hear that Honduras is a democracy? "Presidential Republic," to be exact. But to the people of Honduras, their country is owned by two families that trade off power every election, so each family gets its kick at the can in turn to avoid a war. Its elections, my sources say, are rigged.

Anyway, the woodworkers there make a meagre living hoping to open trade with Canada, and the logs get cut and maybe sold, but only in repressed, non-competitive markets. Maybe like China.

We did a profile on a shop in La Ceiba a few years back. I was touched after we mailed out copies to hear back from the owner. He was so proud of the story, and he was surprised by us. "You told the truth," he said, as if we would do otherwise. "You told the truth."

Quite different, I'd say, from contaminated lingerie and fake watches. Honesty is in their blood. 

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Michael Muraz

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Prosperity over the **HORIZON**

When expansion demands
breaking out of province —
or Canada

Many wood-industry manufacturers have businesses that do well in their own back yards — where customers are never farther than a tank of gas in the company pickup truck. But there comes a time when a cabinetmaker or furniture manufacturer wants to expand beyond its municipality to the next province or even another country.

To just ramp up production and hope for the best in new markets is, of course, foolhardy without a solid plan in place. Luckily, wood-products manufacturers in Canada can turn to some great financial and business organizations for advice and services. Export Development Canada (EDC), Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) and Export Quebec all have services and programs that can help you take the next steps to increase your business.

STANDING BY with ANSWERS

Philip Turi, director, Advisory Services at EDC in Ottawa, Ont., runs the organization's Trade Advisor Team, which it operates like a service centre. Turi's team is standing by to offer answers to the myriad questions that exporters might ask, as well as provide information on issues they might not be aware of yet (exporthelp@edc.ca).

"My team is set up to answer all of those questions about how you find customers in a foreign market, in addition to agents and distributors," Turi says. "Questions such as 'how do the regulations apply to me?' and 'which tariffs are relevant for my business.'"

In the province of Quebec, wood-industry businesses can turn to Export Quebec for many services, including expenses in traveling to key events in the U.S. and Canada, such as the Canadian Furniture Show in Toronto, NeoCon in Chicago, Ill., High Point Market in Charlotte, N.C., and the Las Vegas Market Salon in Las Vegas, Nev. According to Pierre Richard, president, Quebec Furniture Manufacturers Association (QFMA) of Montreal, Que., furniture manufacturing in Canada represents 63,000 jobs (roughly half of the total in the highly subsidized Canadian automotive assembly and parts manufacturing industry).

When Richard assumed the leadership of the QFMA about four years ago and did a “walk-through” of government ministries in Quebec City and Ottawa, he found the industry was barely visible. “It really surprised me considering how important our industry has been and continues to be.

“We started looking at ways of working closer with government at the provincial level to help governments make informed decisions. We’re not looking for handouts from governments. We’re looking to make them understand what the consequences are of certain decisions and how they could impact our industry. When you talk about Export Quebec as an example, we were not on their radar screen at all.” Luckily, after a consultation process was put in place, the situation has gradually changed.

“We managed to develop a program with the government for the last two years providing assistance to our exporters to participate in these fairs,” says Richard. “The reality is there are many government programs in Quebec at the provincial and the federal level that aren’t well known by manufacturers. The smaller you are as a manufacturer the more difficult it is to understand the programs and the forms you fill out.”

Simon Bouchard, president of Montreal, Que.-based Ateliers Jacob and the Association of Manufacturers and Retailers of the Quebec Kitchen Industry (AFDICQ) of Levis, Que., has taken advantage of Export Quebec programs for his own business. Cabinet manufacturer Ateliers Jacob has four locations across Canada and one in Florida. “If you hire a sales representative they pay 50 percent of the salary,” says Bouchard. His company recently acquired Quebec competitor Tendances Concept, effectively doubling the size of the business. Plans are to have as many as 20 cabinet showroom locations across North America.

EVERY MARKET is DIFFERENT

For Ryan Neumann, president, OnSite Group of Companies in Edmonton, Alta., expanding his commercial cabinet and millwork business has meant navigating interprovincial, not international waters. “If somebody is in a saturated market they might spread their wings a little bit and come to Alberta,” says Neumann, “everyone is hungry. It doesn’t matter if they are from Alberta or Prince Edward Island or B.C. or wherever.”

Neumann has noticed that the culture in each province he’s worked in is different. “The expectations are different too. When you get the actual business out of the way people do different things.

“If you don’t know your customer and you don’t do your

due diligence, and you don’t assess your risk properly, then you don’t know if you are going to get paid.

“Let’s say you do a job and they don’t have the bankroll to pay you. Even though there is nothing wrong with your work, they are waiting for the customer to pay them. You can get stretched out to 60 to 120 days. They are in a different province. What do they care?”

When things go south, Neumann notes, “How do you put a lien on something when you have to go hire a lawyer from that province? Then that lawyer has to put a lien on it for you because you are working in different jurisdictions. You might have to pay a premium for that lawyer who is willing to work with a new customer from out of province. It’s happened to us.”

END of the FOOD CHAIN

Another tricky issue working out-of-province are delays at the job site, something of particular concern to cabinet installers like OnSite where it is the last trade in to complete a project. “The millwork is the last to go in so if the trades use up an extra day or two or three days of slope time in the schedule, then it shortens your installation,” Neumann explains. “But the client still has the same expectations.”

Being from out of province, it is too expensive to fly in reinforcements from the shop, so OnSite has come up with a creative solution to overcome project performance penalties.

“What we did before we started the project was qualify some local contractor and upholsterer just in case of a few deficiencies. So, we didn’t have to continue flying people out. It worked out really well.”

The logistics of performing out-of-province work includes more than just shipping material and manpower to project sites, according to Neumann. “Make sure you have the proper insurance. Like if you need to have your truck drive to Vancouver and suddenly disappears with \$250,000 worth of product.” Other issues a business has to educate itself about are who is responsible provincial sales taxes on goods and services, as well as jobsite safety regulations in that particular province.

When out-of-country doing business, however, other issues crop up that can be handled by Canadian trade commissioners dedicated to their foreign market. “It is their job to find networks locally and to maintain those networks, to maintain lists of services providers that you are going to need to work with if you want to get your product into the market,” says Turi. “Some of those services providers would include individuals like customs brokers to look after clearing customs, oftentimes in a



cost-efficient way. Local accountants, local lawyers, local suppliers which can become relevant when you look at your local supply chain.

“You may need to rejig your supply chain for a certain country or region to take advantage of rules of origin requirements that are a result of trade agreements. You may need to see that a certain proportion of your product is manufactured in either Canada or there to

take advantage of that 0 percent tariff.”

Turi points to a program called CanExport that is run by the trade commissioners’ services. The program provides funding to companies that have some export experience or little to no export experience. “The funding can be used to shoulder the costs of travelling to a trade mission,” says Turi. “There are a whole bunch of qualifying expenses that are associated with setting up a booth, having marketing materials travel to and from that location. CanExport does provide matching funds for companies that are thinking about spending that kind of money to go over to a foreign market.”

Another recommendation that Turi makes is to explore

partnering with a large logistics company for in-market assistance abroad. “They don’t just include helping you to ship your product to market. They also help you find organizations or suppliers to work with you further down the production process in market.

LINE UP your PARTNERS

“I always say that the export strategy should be lining up your company’s production processes. That includes your supply and value chain with the partners that you are going to need to work with if you want to sell into a market. That includes the customs broker, shipping firm, logistics firm. Those are the benefits of being with a larger shipping firm. But that comes at a price.”

Turi notes that you shouldn’t feel isolated in the process of setting up an export business for your products. “It is daunting if you are thinking of about going at it alone,” he says.

“My main point is that there are lots of partners around and available that you are going to have to work with one way or another to get your product into market. What probably makes it daunting is that folks fail to realize that those partners are out there.”



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Excellence in wood design recognized



Innovative architectural and structural design in taller and larger mass timber buildings headlined the recent 2018 Wood Design Awards event at the Vancouver Convention Centre. The 14th annual event, organized and hosted by **Wood WORKS! BC**, a program of the Ottawa, Ont.-based **Canadian Wood Council**, honoured excellence in wood building and design, and recognized leadership and innovation in wood use. The 18-storey Brock Commons – Tallwood House from Acton Ostry Architects of Vancouver, B.C., won awards in a record three categories — the Wood Innovation Award, Architect Award and the Engineer Award. There were 100 nominations in 14 categories this year, featuring projects of all types and sizes, and all demonstrating outstanding architectural and structural achievement using wood. Structural engineering firm **Fast + Epp** and fire engineering/building code consultants **GHL Consultants**, both of Vancouver, shared the Engineer Award for the project.

Weinig adds to sales and service team

Weinig HolzHer Canada of Laval, Que., has announced that the compa-

ny is adding to both its sales and service teams. Ken Ellston is joining as



Jonathan Dion



Ken Ellston

sales director for Western Canada. Ellston brings more than 20 years' experience in wood industry machinery sales and service and is said to be both comfortable in a meeting room or on the shop floor. Jonathan Dion has joined the company as a field service technician. Dion brings over ten years of experience working on machinery and automated manufacturing systems. He will be based in Quebec City servicing customers in Eastern Quebec and the Maritimes. **Weinig HolzHer Canada** sells and supports a dealer network in Canada, providing a wide range of woodworking machines for solid wood and panel processing manufacturing.

Ligna organizer expands to Iran

Hanover, Germany-based **Deutsche Messe**, the organizer of the **Ligna** show, has expanded its brand to Iran. **Medex**, the international trade



fair for woodworking and wood processing, materials, accessories, furniture and laminate flooring, will

have its premiere event presented at the Permanent Fair Ground in Tehran, Iran from July 10 to 13, 2018 in partnership with Deutsche Messe. Deutsche Messe's partner for the event is the **Iran Furniture Manufacturers and Exporters Association** — which also includes importers of furniture production machines along with raw materials and accessories. Recent developments in Iran have opened up new market opportunities for furniture manufacturers, suppliers and contract furnishers, according to the show organizer, with suppliers hoping for rising exports to Iran after the extensive lifting of sanctions. **Medex** is geared to visitors from the wood industry, flooring and timber construction sectors, as well as furniture manufacturers from neighboring nations like Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Turkmenistan and the United Arab Emirates.

Ateliers Jacob acquires Tendances Concept



Simon Bouchard

After several months of negotiations, **Ateliers Jacob** of St-Laurent, Que., a kitchen and bathroom cabinet manufacturer, has acquired **Tendances Concept** from St-Jérôme, Que.

Simon Bouchard, president of **Ateliers Jacob**, said that the brand **Trends Concept**, will remain in the market, because both represent a quality benchmark in kitchen and bathroom design. Bouchard stated that the plan is to keep the two factories, but to optimize their use. One will focus on natural wood and paint, the other on synthetic materials. The two manufacturers will be amalgamated in order to achieve economies of scale. It will see its annual business volume reach \$20 million and overall workforce to surpass 120 employees. The company plans to open a network of 20 stores in North America, including Florida,

where the company already markets its products to builders, developers and construction contractors. Ateliers Jacob has branches in Montreal, St-Jérôme, Longueuil, St-Calixte, Que., and Calgary, Alta.

Tolko and Hunt to build sawmill in Louisiana

Tolko Industries of Vernon, B.C., has partnered with Ruston, La.-based Hunt Forest Products to build a sawmill near Urania, La. The venture is the first outside Canada for Tolko. Construction of the approximately \$115 million US project is expected to commence in April and be completed by December 2018. It will employ approximately 110 people and will produce southern yellow pine lumber from timber harvested in the surrounding area. The scope of the project includes a 200 million-board-foot facility that will consume approximately 850,000 tons of timber annually, three continuous dry kilns and a planer facility.

Hettich Group business up 2017



Andreas Hettich

The Hettich group of companies headquartered in Kirchlingern, Germany, generated €975 million of revenues in 2017. This represents an increase of 6.8 percent over

2016. As announced by the chairman of the management board, managing partner Andreas Hettich, business outside Germany rose to 71 percent of revenues after accounting for 69 percent the year before. In 2017, close to €116 million was invested in products, plant and buildings world-wide. Around the globe, the group had an average of 6600 employees over the year. Hettich products include hinges, drawer systems, cabinet drawer slides, folding and sliding door systems, and architectural sliding and folding door systems.

Roseburg to acquire Pembroke MDF

Springfield, Ore.-based Roseburg Forest Products has reached an agreement in principle with Pembroke MDF of Pembroke, Ont., to purchase Pembroke's medium density fiberboard (MDF) and molding production facilities. The acquisition will be Roseburg's first international purchase and will continue the company's expansion throughout North America. Roseburg is currently building



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158,000 acres of timberland in Virginia and North Carolina. The company has also named Ashlee Cribb as vice president of Structural Products, with responsibility for the sales and manufacturing of Roseburg's engineered wood products, softwood plywood and lumber businesses. In a related move, Mark Avery, current vice president of Roseburg's Composites Business and Logistics, has been promoted to senior vice president of Industrial Products and National Accounts.

AFDICQ welcomes five new members

The Association of Manufacturers and Retailers of the Quebec Kitchen Industry (AFDICQ) has announced the addition of five new members. **Super-Print Cabinets** of Montreal, **RRM Kitchen** of McMasterville, **Granite Evolution**

of Courcelles, **ADC Cabinets** of Sherbrooke and **Station Grill Exterior Kitchen** of Mercier have joined the organization. AFDICQ promotes the development of Quebec industries specialized in kitchen and bathroom cabinetry.

SmartLam to build new CLT plant

SmartLam of Columbia Falls, Montana, has announced the opening of a new cross-laminated timber (CLT) manufacturing facility in Maine. The decision to expand to the East Coast comes four months after the company announced its plans to open another facility in Columbia Falls that will serve as its new headquarters. SmartLam currently produces more than 1 million board feet of CLT per month. SmartLam's expansion news comes shortly after

Charlotte, N.C.-based **LignaTerra Global**, another manufacturer of CLT, announced it will build a \$30 million, 300,000 sq. ft. CLT plant — also in Maine. That plant will begin production in one year.

Onsrud expands machine tool production



C.R. Onsrud, a manufacturer of CNC machine tools based in Troutman, N.C., has opened a new 55,000 sq.-ft. fabrication centre. Located in Building 2, the centre houses the functions of turning raw materials into the base, columns, bridges and other components of its CNC machines. Building 1 has been remodeled to house several new milling


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machines which turn the frames produced in the new fabrication centre, into finished CNC products.

AME launches Emerging Leaders Program

The Association for Manufacturing Excellence (AME), based in Rolling Meadows, Ill., has announced the launch of its AME Emerging Leaders program, a leadership development initiative to enable the next generation of lean manufacturing leaders. The program provides a platform for lean practitioners to participate in problem-solving work groups, network with peers, and serve the profession in a leadership capacity. It also puts participants on a fast track to AME volunteerism. The program seeks diversity based on geography, gender, ethnicity and type of industry.

Precision Drive Systems opens West Coast office

Bessemer City, N.C.-based Precision Drive Systems, a global provider of high-speed precision spindle motors,

support and spindle repair, has announced the opening of its new U.S. West Coast branch that will also serve Western Canada. The office is located in Arlington, Wash., part of the Seattle Metropolitan area. The company provides spindle sales and service for CNC routers, milling machines and robotic units. Along with the new office, the company has expanded its area of service to include moulder spindles, panel saw arbors and aggregate repair, in addition to mechanical, belt driven spindles and multi-spindle boring units. The new office will be headed up by Bill Pyle, West Coast regional sales manager. The company will also offer a drop off service for customers in the area as well as training on spindle maintenance.

Beaudoin expands production, adds new line

Beaudoin has announced the expansion and redevelopment of its bed production facilities in Daveluyville, Que. Representing an investment of \$3 million, the company will expand

existing buildings by 34,000 sq. ft., in addition to adding a new production line. The furniture manufacturer has a 53-foot truck that makes weekly deliveries in the Montreal-Toronto corridor, and is assisted by North American carriers in deliveries across Canada and the U.S.

AFMQ welcomes three new members

The Montreal, Que.-based Quebec Furniture Manufacturers Association (AFMQ) has announced three new members. **MoMa Sur mesure**, located in Granby, Que., designs and makes covers for benches, chairs, armchairs and acoustic panels with a minimum of 85 percent recovered materials. Located in Daveluyville, Que., **GoBerce** specializes in the design, manufacture and import of living room sets, ball chairs and other furniture. **Groupe Genesia** of Quebec City imports and distributes sawn timber and finished products from several tropical species in Africa. 



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Five options for defending yourself **Small claims court**

By Angela Kwok

Going to court can be expensive. However, in some circumstances, a lower-cost option is available. The Small Claims Court is a branch of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice that is designed to be a people's court and a "court of equity." It was created to increase access to justice by providing a more efficient, cost-effective, and less formal forum to resolve disputes. Small Claims Court is seen as a place where an individual can readily and inexpensively access justice, without the use of a lawyer. It includes features such as simpler procedures and relaxed rules of evidence to facilitate access to justice.

Because the monetary limit for Small Claims Court is \$25,000, a plaintiff with a claim above \$25,000 must abandon its claim for the amounts be-

yond \$25,000 in order to come within the monetary jurisdiction of the Small Claims Court.

Although the Small Claims Court is intended to be a more cost-effective forum, defendants may find themselves in a lose-lose situation. Unlike plaintiffs, defendants have no choice but to defend the action or face the risk of being the subject of a default judgment. Even if a defendant retains a lawyer and successfully defends the claim, he or she may have incurred more legal fees than the monetary value of the claim.

A defendant has several options when sued, depending on the circumstances of the case and the amount of money the defendant is able and willing to spend, including to pay all or part of the claim, ignore the claim, re-

tain a lawyer, act as a self-represented litigant, or negotiate a settlement.

Pay all or part of the claim

Needless to say, paying the amount claimed is the simplest way to resolve a claim. However, it is also the least likely route that most defendants will choose. A defendant may consider paying part of the claim, or negotiating a payment plan with the plaintiff to pay all or part of the claim.

If a claim cannot be settled with the plaintiff, the defendant must dispute the claim or the amount being claimed, and the following alternatives must be considered.

Ignore the claim

It is risky to ignore a claim that has been properly served on you. A defendant has 20 days from the date of service of the claim to provide a defence, failing which the plaintiff is entitled to obtain a default judgment. That judgment can then be enforced against the defendant through various enforcement proceedings, including garnishment proceedings, judgment debtor examinations, and writs of seizure and sale.

A default judgment can be set aside only if the plaintiff can demonstrate to the court that the motion was brought as soon as is reasonably possible in the circumstances, that there was a reasonable explanation for the default, and that there is a meritorious defence to the claim. While the court will often set aside a default judgment if the three conditions are met, there are no guarantees that it will do so and every case depends on the specific facts.

The headache and expense of setting aside a default judgment can be avoided by defending the claim within the timelines. Accordingly, even if you are infuriated at being sued and believe there is no merit to the claim, do not sit on it. Instead, do your best to respond to the claim promptly and properly.

Retain a lawyer

When served with a claim, it is always helpful to speak with a lawyer to obtain advice regarding the applicable rules, timelines, and legal procedures. Of course, the problem with retaining

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a lawyer to defend a relatively modest claim is that you must pay legal fees. Good lawyers can be expensive. As well, it is often difficult to predict how the litigation will progress and how much it will ultimately cost. The conduct of the opposing party along with other unpredictable factors can make a “simple” claim become much more complicated and time-consuming, and therefore, more expensive.

Because a defendant’s legal fees may surpass the amount of the claim, a defendant may look back and regret not having simply paid the amount claimed. However, the decision to defend a claim may have been based on notions of principle and fairness rather than on the legal costs involved than they are about letting the plaintiff succeed.

It is important to note that only a small portion of legal costs can be recovered by the successful party in Small Claims Court. The amounts awarded are limited by the *Small Claims Court Rules* and the *Courts of Justice Act*. Successful parties are entitled to recover a “reasonable representation fee” if they are represented by a lawyer, which is capped at a maximum of \$3,750. The amount allowed is subject to the discretion of the court, and is often more modest than the maximum allowed.

While retaining a lawyer is often beneficial because of his or her knowledge, an alternative to retaining a lawyer a defendant can act as a self-represented litigant.

Self-represented litigant

Small Claims Court is intended to be easily accessible by lay citizens without the assistance of lawyers. Accordingly,

there are various resources available to the public to assist self-represented litigants. For example, the Ministry of the Attorney General website includes general information and guides for different elements and procedures involved in a lawsuit. The *Small Claims Court Rules*, which provide all the rules and procedures for Small Claims Court matters, are also available online. Self-represented litigants are able to gain a good understanding of the process and procedures through these resources and to navigate the justice system effectively.

Self-representation is not cost free. Court fees must be paid to defend a claim. There may also be expenses involved with preparing and delivering documents to other parties or taking time off work to attend court. Self-represented litigants can request a maximum of \$500.00 as compensation for “inconvenience and expense.”

Settlement

It is important to keep in mind that at any point of the proceedings before trial, the parties can settle the claim to avoid further litigation. There are many reasons why a plaintiff may agree to settle for less than the amount claimed, including that:

The plaintiff may want to obtain immediate payment now rather than waiting until trial;

The claim, or the amount being claimed, may be difficult to prove;

The plaintiff may want to avoid the trouble and time of going through the full legal proceedings;

The plaintiff may want to minimize le-

gal costs by avoiding having to go through the full legal process and prepare for trial if they have retained a lawyer; and

The plaintiff may be more likely to get money from the defendant through a mutual settlement, rather than through a court judgment which may require the plaintiff to take enforcement proceedings and incur costs if the defendant refuses to pay.

It is always advisable to remain open to discuss and negotiate, and to be reasonable in order to make it possible to negotiate a settlement. Often, an amicable resolution of the dispute will result in less disgruntled parties than will a full-fledged trial where there is inevitably a winner and a loser.

Conclusion

Do not fret if you are served with a Small Claims Court claim. Try to understand the claim and what the plaintiff is trying to achieve by suing you. Critically assess your position and consider the options and resources available to you before you take any action, but be aware of the applicable deadlines. Should you decide to act as a self-represented litigant, ensure that you understand the court’s rules and procedures and take them seriously. They are not mere technicalities. If you decide to retain a lawyer to represent you, be sure to have an open discussion about legal fees with your lawyer. In either case, consider whether the legal fees or legal costs may outweigh the value of defending the claim.

Angela Kwok is a lawyer at Lawrences Lawyers, Brampton, Ont.

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ANOTHER BOX BUILDER? NO.

Quality hums at custom cabinet shop

Nestled in a leafy family neighbourhood in Winnipeg, Man., custom cabinet shop Mosaic Millwork has been serving the local high-end residential market for 13 years.

Co-owners Randy Gunnink and Dan Nobel both have Red Seal Journeyman Certificates in Cabinet Making and have an easy way to remember just how long they've been in business together: "as long as Dan's been married," says Gunnink.

The combined expertise of the owners comes with more than just their time together and both being medal winners in the Manitoba Skills Competition. Gunnink has been in his trade since 1995, working in various cabinet shops in Canada and Australia, and is certified in Architectural CAD Technology.

Nobel has been in his trade since 1999 and takes care of the renovation and installation side of Mosaic Millwork, while Gunnink manages the shop. "We're definitely both from

hands-on backgrounds," says Nobel, "and we are from the same community as well — I was working for Randy as foreman at my first shop."

Mosaic Millwork was started off of the back of another company that went into receivership. "As a result, there was a large amount of equipment floating around that needed a new home and space," according to Nobel. "We picked up the space in here — about the same as a double garage."

From there the company has grown to its current size of about 7,000 sq. ft., in part by maintaining a good relationship with the landlord. "As we grew, we just asked for more space," says Nobel, "and were able to add as needed."

While their current works interests are the same, the co-owner's backgrounds do differ. "My Dad couldn't hold a hammer," laughs Nobel. "I don't know where I got it from."

In contrast, Gunnink's father was more hands-on. "He was in the construction industry for a number of

years and did a lot of work at home," says Gunnink.

The first employee hired at Mosaic was in 2006, about a year after the company started, coming all the way from Alberta. Finding suitable staff is a challenge, but Gunnink notes that he finds the most successful way is through recruiting agencies. "You can find very specific talent," he says. "We tried the Kijiji route, but it comes with its own set of problems and challenges. Then everybody is applying, even if it's as a dishwasher, janitor or taxi driver."

Mosaic Millwork has also recruited from the summer placement program of the nearby Red River College wood processing course. "They are required to pick up part time work from a shop in the city," says Nobel. "One student returned after he got his certificate and is now one of our employees."

"It is always a challenge to decide if you want to hire unexperienced and train them or hire experienced — there's a balance you have to strike."



Mosaic Millwork is mindful of health and safety on behalf of its employees, as well as government inspectors. The company has dust collectors and a heat recovery unit in its spray booths, as well as air filtration systems for all of its sanding operations.

According to Nobel, Mosaic has always targeted the mid- to higher-end of the residential market, with about 10 percent of business coming from the commercial side of the market. “We are more interested in doing the unique stuff,” he says, “There are plenty of box builders out there — we are not interested in getting into their field.”

Mosaic started just as a millwork

cabinet making company but has “morphed into a general contractor as well,” says Nobel, “just as a result of being able to better service our clients.” By taking care of everything, there is added value as the customer only has to shop in one place, he adds. “They get everything from design work, permits, everything up to the last screw in the cabinet. They really appreciate that.”

Over the time that Mosaic has been in business customer tastes have changed, a factor that has altered the product it creates. “We used to do much more stained wood,” says Gunnink. “Now we are getting into more glossy, solid colours, and some natural woods — but not as much.” The company also designs and supplies coun-

tertops, primarily quartz or stone countertops (fabricated by a third party), as opposed to laminates.

The company is mindful of health and safety on behalf of its employees, as well as government inspectors. “We have dust collectors and a heat recovery unit in our spray booths,” says Gunnink, “as well as air filtration systems for all of our sanding.”

Being in a residential neighbourhood, it also strives to have a low impact on the environment. “We make sure we take the necessary steps to be compliant and have never really had an issue,” Gunnink says. “And inspectors are pretty sticky. They come around often enough to keep us on our toes.

“We like to keep a nice clean work environment that helps as well for the



Randy Gunnink (front) and Dan Nobel, Mosaic Millwork co-owners. No matter how many projects are completed throughout the course of a year, the two are committed to providing high quality craftsmanship for their clients.

going at a time,” says Nobel. Although kitchen renovations are still the best source of work for the company, it been doing a lot more bathrooms lately, he says. “A whole package deal can be a challenge. Some projects take three or four months, some a couple of weeks.”

Depending on the size of the projects, the company will complete four to 12 renovations per year, according to Gunnink. “People are definitely more knowledgeable now,” he says. “They know what’s out there and what they want.”

Occasionally, however, there is no avoiding “time-killing” projects, says Gunnink. “Once in a while they fall in your lap. ‘Discerning’ customers are what they are called.”

The big part of the company’s job is service — taking care of people. “Punctuality is a big part of it,” says Gunnink, “being where you say you are

going to be. Taking care of our customers until the last screw is in the cabinet. The job you do is your advertising.

“You want to know they are going to refer you.”

Nobel adds, “there is a set of procedures we go through to get the job done right.”

Mosaic Millwork tends to partner more with interior designers than architects. “It has helped us understand what we are going to provide, especially with perspectives. The customer feels like they are in the space. You can’t get away with a simple line drawing anymore.”

Custom furniture has also emerged as part of the business, such as entertainment units, fireplaces, bunkbeds, tables and RV interior renovations, as well as wood paneling, stairs and railings.

“There isn’t too much we haven’t touched yet,” says Gunnink. 

safety and happiness of our employees — there are six of us running around now.”

Juggling projects with a compact staff requires planning and good customer relations to ensure ongoing success for Mosaic Millwork. “We like to have two or three kitchen renovations



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At a simple woodshop in Cambodia Balance, for now

It was harder than I had anticipated. But that's because I didn't think it through. I wanted to visit a furniture factory in Cambodia, and that isn't what the tour operators usually handle. I'm not sure they quite believed that was what I wanted. But I was stubborn and I prevailed.



Paul Epp

The facility that I visited was the wholesaler in a village of furniture sellers. And the furniture doesn't vary much from shop to shop. It is solid wood and often quite massive. The table tops are usually at least four inches thick, so they don't need support rails. They sit on top of one or two round pedestals. The turnings are large in scale, especially in comparison to what we in the West are used to. They are often 12 to 16 inches in diameter, or even larger, and turned with profiles that are a variation of valleys and bumps and other details that turning tools are good at. If the diameter isn't adequate for the size of the table top, they are secured to a simple 'x' base, with the legs extending horizontally outwards.

Factory may not be quite the right description. The building was a pole-barn type construction that held up a roof. No walls were needed, nor a floor that differed from the rest of outside. The most surprising aspect

was how much was achieved with so little. The principle or initial tool is a long-barred chainsaw. It was used to break out the stock from the wood slabs. It probably made the slabs too. No sawmill required. There was a smallish bandsaw, which profiled the various linear elements and would have given the round table tops their geometry. The table saw was true to its name: a simple wooden leg and rail table with a sawblade piercing the top. No machinery supplier was getting rich off of this shop.

A portable, electric hand-planer provided the smoothness that was desired and then various electric hand sanders finished the job.

The second most important tool would have been the lathe. I had wondered about that. The turned pedestals, and their cousins, the stools and side tables and various other vertical furniture pieces are all made from unlaminated, solid-wood stock: sections of tree trunk (or limb). And these are heavy, and initially, out of balance. The material-handling problem was solved by mounting the tail stock and head stock directly to the floor (the ground) on embedded timbers. The round sections of tree could simply be rolled along the ground and then cranked in tight between the centres. No forklift needed. The lathe operator sat in a pit, with a loose tool-rest spanning the pit, which included the distance between the centres. When different lengths were turned, the dead centre was simply moved over and reattached to the timber at a new location. Various pulleys be-

tween the electric motor lagged down to the ground provided the changes in speed that might be desired. That motor also ran the table saw.

And that was pretty much it.

In keeping with this scale of operation, it was likely that the business was family-owned and operated. That eliminated the requirements of safety regulations, union requirements and so on. It might be tempting to call it streamlined, but it would never have become complicated enough to need any. A lot of wood work was pushed through this shop. The other neighbouring shops then finished their orders to their own specifications.

Another thing that surprised me was how little variation there was in the designs. I think that the companies' strategies mostly rely on cost/price to be their selling advantage. But this shouldn't have been a surprise. The designs that were being replicated were ones that were proven to sell. The market knew what it wanted and what it wanted is what had been made and used before. I imagine that this will change, along with increasing prosperity, urbanization and globalization. The resorts and restaurants that buy wood furniture will look for their own expressions. Western-educated customers may also seek a different look. That's already happening in the architecture and what's done in furniture will follow.

Changing the designs will probably also require changing the technology behind them. And that will be a big change. Right now, there is a harmony between the designs and the tools that are used to make them, all nicely balanced in a simple and interconnected system. But the big trees will soon be gone and that alone might drive the need to do things differently. 

Paul Epp is an adjunct professor at OCAD University, and former chair of its Industrial Design department.

When it comes to vacuum hold-down Don't suck

An often-overlooked aspect of digital manufacturing is how to hold down the material while performing the machining operation. Over the years and



Alain Albert

can lead to inferior performance and much wasted time and material.

Most modern CNC routers use what is known as universal vacuum or the “nested-based” approach to part hold-down where a thin layer of vacuum pressure

after talking to various manufacturers large and small at one end of the country or the other, everyone agrees that this small function is often the source of major frustration and

is created at the surface of a sacrificial board enabling a whole sheet of material to be cut in one sitting.

When problems arise with parts not being held down properly, along with flying debris, very little information is available to the modern manufacturer. The size of the pump seems to be the only thing of concern to the equipment salesman and as with many other things in life, size is not the only attribute that matters here. Very often, the existing vacuum system can do the job perfectly well if it is handled properly. Here are some simple steps that can be taken to drastically improve the performance of your vacuum hold-down system:

- Measure all the valves, fittings and piping to see if they have at least the same size interior openings as the intake of the pump so not to restrict the flow of air along the way.

- Make sure that the piping from the pump to the table is as short and as straight as possible. Any twists and turns and coils of flexible hose only weaken the flow of air in the system.
- Check that all the gaskets and seals are in good working condition around the surface of the table. Replace worn gaskets or add some where needed. You can program the router to machine a channel for gasket foam tape in an aluminum or phenolic table.
- Seal the edges of your MDF spoil-boards or sacrificial boards with tape or shellac to prevent leakage from the edges. Doing this alone will yield impressive results.
- If you lose pressure in the middle of the cut or with a half-loaded table, try adding a second spoil-board on top of the first one. Make sure to surface at least 20 thousandths of an inch off both sides the boards to remove the polished surface of the MDF. By using two, you're restricting air flow just enough to concentrate it around the parts.
- Cover any open areas of the table when cutting smaller material. Laminate leftovers are perfect for this job.
- If you're going to be cutting small parts, machine your sacrificial board flat so that you can benefit from the full force of the vacuum.

Let's take look at all the elements of a vacuum hold-down system and understand what important function they perform.

The parts that we'll be cutting sit on a **sacrificial board** (or spoil-board or waste board) which is usually made of MDF. MDF is porous enough to let a good amount of air through and act as a sort of suction cup. The surface layers of the MDF are polished by the heated presses during the manufacturing process and these layers must be machined down using a surfacing tool on the CNC. Twenty thousandths of an inch on both sides of the board is usually enough to reach the porous layer and to make the board perfectly straight. As the top surface of the sacrificial board gets grooved from cutting passes, an extra layer can be machined off the top, so that the surface can be nice and flat once again.

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The sacrificial board sits on the **plenum** which is a fancy word that describes the chamber that contains and directs the flow of air from the surface of the table to the plumbing underneath. The plenum is usually made of aluminum or phenolic and has a pattern of grooves or holes that allows the air to flow yet act as a support for the MDF board above. The plenum serves to distribute the air that is sucked through the MDF towards one or many openings to the plumbing below. Here you want to avoid any restrictions and to make sure there is enough room for air to flow easily all the way to the corners of the table. The design of the plenum is crucial in the effectiveness of the vacuum system.

Next is the plumbing which is made up of rigid piping, flexible piping, elbows and valves. On most industrial vacuum systems, the inside diameter of the plumbing is 3 or 4 inches. The important thing to check is the size of the opening at the pump and to make sure that every other element along the path to the table is the same size. Any reduction in opening along the way will reduce the available vacuum pressure at the table. The plumbing should be kept short and straight and use — for the most part — solid smooth piping rather than coiled flexible hose. The vacuum pumps generate a lot of noise and heat and it might be nice to house them in a shed 50 feet away from the table, but that will only have a negative impact on the hold-down performance of the system.

Finally, there is the **vacuum pump** itself which is a mechanical device that moves air in the direction opposite the part, creating suction. Keep in mind that no matter what kind of pump you have, proper maintenance is very important for optimum effectiveness. In most cases, vacuum pumps can work in parallel which means that you can add a second and even a third pump into the same plumbing and dramatically increase the results at the table. In the system in my factory for example, two 10HP rotary vane pumps delivers all the suction power that is needed to hold down parts only a few inches across and when we're machining large parts, one of the pumps can be turned off.

Vacuum is the absence of air or other gases and what is important to understand about vacuum hold-down is that it is not the sucking of the air that holds the part down. It is the pressure of the atmosphere above the part pushing down that provides all the clamping force.

When we remove the air from under the part, the air above pushes down on the part with a theoretical maximum force equivalent to one atmosphere or 14.7 pounds per square inch. We'll never get that much pressure on a nested CNC mind you, but under optimal conditions you should get at least 0.35 to 1 pound per square inch or the equivalent of about 50 pounds or more of clamping force for a part that is 12 inches square.

The next important concept that we need to understand is leakage. There will always be a good amount of air leaking around the parts, inside the freshly made cuts, through the material itself, along the edge of the part, etc... If there is too little leakage, then, chances are that not enough vacuum pressure is transmitted all the way to the part and if there is too much leakage, not enough vacuum pressure is

left to hold anything down.

In a given vacuum system, it's important to find the balance between vacuum pressure, air flow and leakage. The job of the pump and the reason it's called a high flow vacuum pump is to compensate in real time for the leakage and to supply enough flow of air at high enough pressure to create a vacuum at the part in order to hold it down. A good example to illustrate this is if you used a rubber suction cup to hold a smooth polished part, all you would need is a very small pump. If you tried holding a sponge or a tee-shirt with the same suction cup, you'd need a pump that can pull a great amount more air.

There are always ways to improve the performance of your vacuum system but to start with you need an effective way to measure the performance of your system before and after the improvements that you make. A good test of the performance of a vacuum hold-down system on a nested CNC router is to cut a 12 x 12-inch square out of melamine with a handle in the middle and to pull it off the vacuum table with a fish or luggage scale. This will give you a reading that you can use to gauge your efforts against and you should be able to pull on it with a force of at least 50 lbs. before it lifts.

Share your thoughts and may the force of vacuum be with you. 

*Professionally trained in architecture, **Alain Albert** has worked in wood as an entrepreneur, in production management, in design and as a digital manufacturing consultant. Contact: aalbert@wimediainc.ca.*



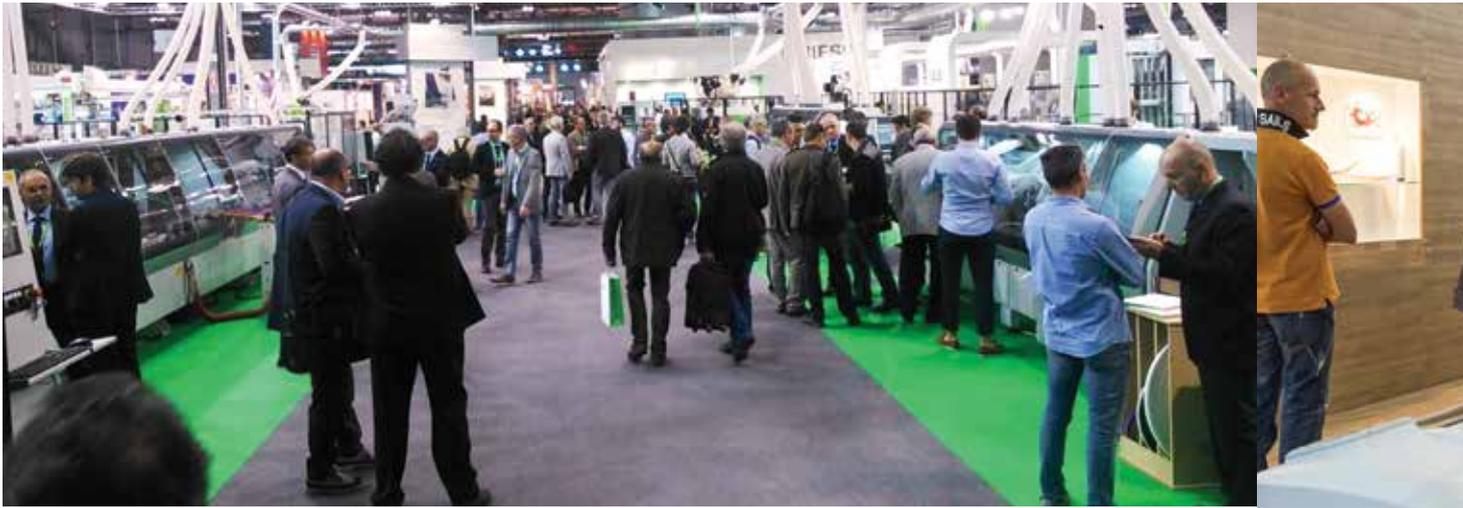
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Global innovation on display: **Xylexpo 2018**

Activity is in full swing for the next edition of **Xylexpo**, the biennial international exhibition of woodworking technology and furniture industry supplies to be held at FieraMilano-Rho from May 8-12, 2018 in Milan, Italy.

Big brands such as **Homag, Weinig Holz-Her, Cefla, Ima Schelling, Scm** and **Biesse** have submitted their registrations, some of them with a significant expansion of their booth area. As a result, organizers have decided to add one hall, hall 4.

Halls 1 and 3 will host companies specializing in the production of panel processing machinery and tools, surface finishing and the related products, hardware, semi-finished materials and supplies; halls 2 and 4 will be dedicated to panel and solid wood processing machin-

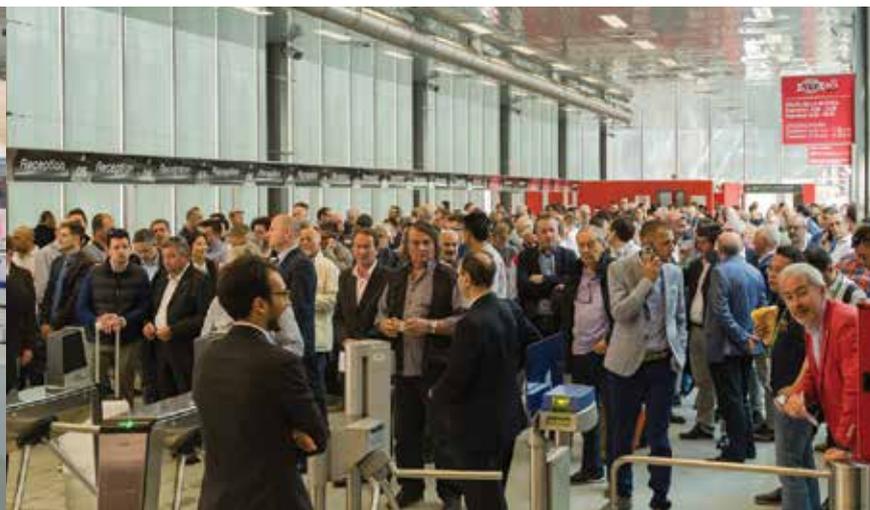
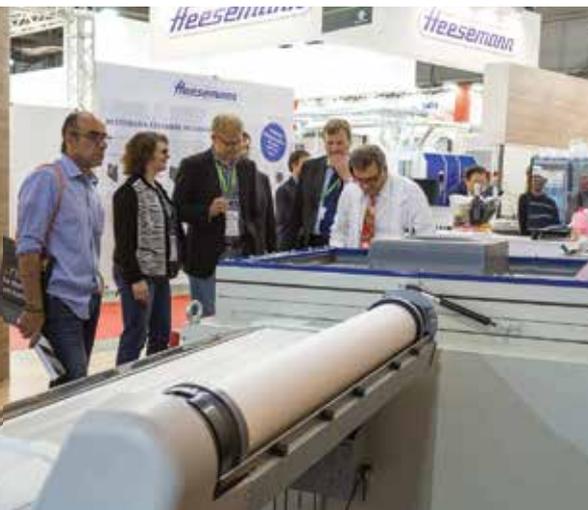
ery and tools, primary operation equipment and tools, semi-finished materials and complementary accessories.

Again, this year — in line with an approach that Xylexpo adopted several years ago before all major international exhibitions — each hall will have a “focal point” represented by one or more industry “giants.” In hall 1 this role will be played by Biesse and **Barberan**, in hall 2 it will be Scm Group. Homag and Cefla will be the focus in hall 3, Ima and Weinig in hall 4.

Xylexpo 2018 has also announced the third edition of Xia-Xylexpo Innovation Awards.

The award is dedicated to all initiatives deployed by Xylexpo 2018 exhibitors that improve a technology. To





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represent the entire spectrum of solutions exhibited at Xylexpo 2018, the award will include four categories: Primary Processing and Solid Wood Processing, Panel Processing, Tools, Coating/Finishing.

Looking forward to this Xylexpo, there has been excellent news coming from the wood industry market. Global leader Germany's export in the first six months of 2017

exceeded €1 billion euro, with a 7 percent increase compared to the same period of the previous year.

Italy remains at number two in the ranking of technology manufacturers, with €274 million export in the first half 2017. North America the main destination for "made in Italy" products, while the second and third places are occupied by Germany and Poland respectively. 

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REMARKABLE COOPERATION

U.S. Court, industry, environmental groups back formaldehyde emission standards

After years of industry associations cooperating with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on formaldehyde emission standards, a recent position reversal by the EPA prompted a court decision to allow the rollout of the standards to continue, but at a slower pace.

On February 16, 2018, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California issued an order granting plaintiffs', the Sierra Club and A Community Voice-Louisiana, motion for summary judgment. The court determined that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) final rule delaying the compliance date for the formaldehyde emission standards for composite wood products (Delay Rule) exceeded EPA's authority under the Formaldehyde Standards in Composite Wood Products Act (Formaldehyde Act) codified as Title VI of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), vacated the Delay Rule, and set aside the year-long extension to December 12, 2018, of the compliance deadlines set out by EPA in the Delay Rule.

In the latest ruling on March 13, however, the compli-

ance issue was clarified, according to the Composite Panel Association (CPA), based in Leesburg, Va.

"The Court's *vacatur* (proceeding annulment) will be applied prospectively from June 1," states CPA president Jackson Morrill, "which will be treated as the new manufactured-by date. This ensures that composite wood products and finished goods containing them that are produced between December 12, 2017 and June 1, 2018 are not treated as out of compliance with the regulation."

The Delay Rule, issued on September 25, 2017 (82 Fed. Reg. 44533), sought to extend further the compliance dates set out in its December 12, 2016, final rule that implemented the Formaldehyde Act (Formaldehyde Rule) (81 Fed. Reg. 89674), specifically: the December 12, 2017, manufactured-by date for emission standards, record-keeping, and labeling provisions until December 12, 2018; the December 12, 2018, compliance date for import certification provisions until March 22, 2019; and the December 12, 2023, compliance date for provisions applicable to producers of laminated products until March 22, 2024.

"The sell-through provision is preserved and will cover any panels and finished goods manufactured prior to the June 1, 2018 manufacture-by-date," states Morrill.

The EPA now will recognize as TSCA Title VI compliant all CARB 2 certified panels and finished products made with those panels until March 22, 2019.

"Panel manufacturers and finished goods manufacturers will be able to label their products made with CARB-2 certified panels as TSCA Title VI compliant during an interim period from June 1, 2018 – March 22, 2019," states Morrill.

According to Betsy Natz, c.e.o. of the Kitchen Cabinet Manufacturers Association based in Reston, Va., the work regarding restricting the use of formaldehyde has not been lost. "This has been a collaborative effort between Sierra Club, EPA, KCMA and a number of other trade associations," states Natz.

"Our collective associations were able to provide EPA and the Sierra Club critical information on the practical implications of setting compliance dates that were unworkable to our respective industries. We were pleased that Sierra Club recognized the difficulty in early labeling and proposed adding a provision that would allow companies to continue to sell CARB Phase 2 material until March 22, 2019."

The position of the KCMA was echoed by the CPA. "The settlement represents a remarkable example of cooperation between environmental groups, industry, and the government, which has characterized the efforts on this issue since 2008," according to Morrill. 

Comment at www.woodindustry.ca

New Products

Multi-blade rip saw provides reliable tool clamping



The ProfiRip 340 multi-blade rip saw from **Weinig Holz-Her Canada** is said to provide greater timber yield due to laser-supported TimberMax software and ProfiCut Direct controls with touchscreen. Benefits of the saw include: glueable cut; up to 3-fold blade adjustment with extended slider or chipper; fast retooling without tools with QuickFix feature; reliable tool clamping with the multi-purpose pressure unit; precise material transport via chain feed; simplified width optimization with RipAssist; and, optimal work safety with the company's patented Safety-Plus concept.

www.weinig.com

Pocket door system optimizes cabinet space



The pocket door system from **Salice** has a cam-assisted sliding action that is said to be enhanced by a linear damping system to gently control the final opening and closing movement. The system is easy to install and remove from the cabinet and allows the doors to open and close smoothly and

uniformly, the company says. The pocket door system enables the optimization of space and can be used in a variety of applications – from larder units for kitchens, to hide away appliances like washing machines, freezers or sinks. Each system can be supplied fully-assembled and ready to install, partly assembled or unassembled. Mechanism elements include aluminum profiles in 6060T5 alloy and silver anodized. Maximum weight for each door 66 lb.

www.salicecanada.com

Friction guide designed for reliable slide movement



Accuride has announced the FG115 Friction Guide System. Said to be affordable, lightweight, easy-to-install and low-maintenance, the linear track system brings smooth, reliable slide movement to automated machinery in production lines. The system is designed with two core components: a rail and a carriage. Customers may choose rail lengths of 1 or 2 metres, as well as select from three types of carriages: Non-Adjust, for when movement or clearance do not need to be adjusted; Manual Adjust, for when adjustment is needed for suitable clearance or preload; Auto-Adjust, for when constant preload force is needed for the life of the system. The system load rating is 4,000 N (900 lbf.).

www.accuride.com

Closet storage system cleans up clutter

The Engage system from **Hafele** is a modular, customizable closet storage platform. The system shelves



and drawers fully extend so consumers can reach the back of their closets and are offered in a wide array of hampers, dividers, shoe organizers, folding stations and storage boxes. Hampers come equipped with sliding, metal handles and can be grabbed with one hand, emptied and returned to the closet. All components in the product line feature aluminum frames and dividers in multiple finishes on soft-close, under-mounted slides. Available in standard 18, 24 and 30 in. widths, 36 in. components are available as an option. Drawers are available in both regular and deep depths with matching dividers. Finishes include Nickel Matt with Slate fabric or Oil-Rubbed Bronze with Beach fabric.

www.hafele.ca

CNC machine centre drills panel holes, inserts dowels



The creator 950 CNC machine centre from **Felder** is said to provide complete panel processing with an interior design of 7.3 sq. ft. in a variety of equipment options. Four-sided formatting is standard, with no vacuum pods and intuitive console positioning featured. The units are compliant with CE regulations and suitable for automation solutions in a networked workshop.

www.felder-group.ca

New Products

Undermount slide system mechanically synchronized



In contrast to conventional undermount slide systems, the Dynapro from **Grass** is said to be the first slide that features a synchronization mechanism. This mechanical synchronization of each individual slide ensures enhanced comfort and movement without annoying sounds or resistance, the company says. The operating function of slide remains unchanged even when moving loads of up to 132 lb. Abrasion-resistant nylon rollers ensure smooth and even operation. Units are available for 16 or 19 mm drawer material.

www.grasscanada.com

Miniature furniture rolling door hardware

Custom Service Hardware says its new miniature furniture rolling door hardware offers versatility and is designed for smaller applications. The hardware can be used on an enter-



tainment centre, storage area, or decorative piece. Sold separately, a strap kit and a rail kit are needed for installation.

www.cshardware.com

Dust extractors with suction hose, Bluetooth



Festool has introduced updated models of its CT Dust Extractor product line that feature smooth suction hoses, optimized SYS-Dock with cord holder, T-LOC function and optional Bluetooth connectivity with remote control. The new suction hose is designed for sliding over edges, improved handling and a

longer service life. The CT 26, CT 36, CT 36 AC and CT 48 models can be individually retrofitted with a Bluetooth module for remote operation via a remote control on the suction hose, or a Bluetooth battery pack when working with Festool cordless tools.

www.festoolcanada.com

Digital variable reluctance drill press



The 18 in. Nova Voyager DVR drill press has been introduced by **King Canada**. Features of the smart drill press include a direct drive 1.75 hp high torque motor with no pulleys or

belts to cause vibration. Digital variable reluctance (DVR) direct drive technology with Adaptive Control software combines to produce optimum results in wood, metal, plastic and glass, the company says. Constant torque under load, depth and vibration sensors and emergency stop are some of the benefits, along with slow start pilot hole, tapping assist with chip breaking cycle and self-start functions. Units come with 5/8 in. drill chuck and key, firmware USB cable, knock-out wedge, adjustment wrench and hex keys.

www.kingcanada.com

Kitchen island legs collection

Osborne Wood Products has introduced its collection of kitchen island legs. Island legs are used as counter-top supports or can be split in half and applied to the face of a cabinet. Hand-crafted to emphasize the details of the design, styles include

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traditional, reeded, twisted, contemporary and mission. Most posts are available at 34.5 and 35.5 in. tall and several posts are also available at the 40.5 in. height to accommodate bar height cabinets and eating areas.

www.osbornewood.com

Modular wood divider system for drawer interiors



Richelieu has announced a wood divider system combining trays, dividers, boxes and holders for functional and stylish drawer interiors. Offered in tones of birch and walnut with a woodgrain texture, the Straightline modular wood divider system increases efficiency in the kitchen with well-organized cabinet interiors and drawers, the company says. The system combines a series of trays, utensil dividers, knife blocks, plate holders, spice racks and boxes that snap into place. The system is compatible with Dispensa and Convoy pantry systems, as well as the Comfort II pull-out frame.

www.richelieu.com/straightline

Secured storage provides security on the jobsite

Jobsite storage equipment specialist Knaack has introduced the Knaack Cart Armour for commercial construction and residential contractors that need secured storage solutions

that are easy to access. The product is an interlocking steel paneling system that encloses mobile work carts to secure contents from theft. Installed in less than 15 minutes, the patent pending design incorporates 16-gauge steel panels and a padlock for extra security. The system is designed to wrap around three mobile cart models from the company, including the CA-01, CA-02 and CA-03. It can also be retro-fitted to select



existing cart models already in service without having to modify the cart in any way. The electrical pass-through allows power to be run to the interior of the cart, while keeping the cord free from damage.

www.knaack.com

Random orbit sander with corded power

The M18 random orbit sander from Milwaukee Tool is said to be capable of reaching 12,000 opm and has corded power. The 7,000 to 12,000 opm electronic variable speed control



provides the versatility to optimize speed for material removal and finish work, the company says. The dust canister provides a durable dust containment solution, while the integrated filter allows for efficient dust filtration. For added utility, the sander comes equipped with a universal hose adapter to connect to the most commonly available vacuum hose sizes.

Orbit diameter is 2.38 mm (3/32 in.), pad type is hook and loop, and battery weight is 1.95 kg.

www.milwaukeetool.com

Earplugs reduce the risk of hearing loss and tinnitus



Workers who are exposed to sudden loud impacts or sustained loud sounds, but also want to hear naturally when sound levels are safe, can protect themselves from hearing loss and tinnitus with HD•15 electronic earplugs from Etymotic. The electronic earplugs allow safe sounds to pass through, as though nothing is in the ears, yet instantaneously react to reduce loud sounds and protect hearing, the company says.

www.etymotic.com

Barn door hardware for interior applications



Barn Door Hardware from Mockett is said to be a space-saving tool that can easily be applied to any interior door, including glass. Turn a shared space into a partitioned sectional with an easy-gliding sliding door for privacy, the company says, or substitute a traditional hinged door hardware for barn door hardware to open up the extra space otherwise reserved for a swinging door radius. Brackets, rail, back-to-back door handles, and all mounting hardware included.

www.mockett.com

- Canadian municipalities issued \$8.4 billion in building permits in January, up 5.6 percent following a 2.5 percent rise in December. The January level represents an 11 percent increase from same period last year. —*Statistics Canada*
- Investment in residential construction totaled \$34.5 billion in the fourth quarter, up 9.2 percent (\$2.9 billion) compared with the same period in 2016. —*Statistics Canada*
- Prince Rupert, B.C., is North America's closest port to Asia — 36 hours closer to Shanghai than Vancouver and over 68 hours closer than Los Angeles. The port is Canada's third busiest after Vancouver and Montreal, accounting for approximately \$35 billion worth of trade annually. —*EDC*
- Architecture firms in the U.S. started 2018 on a positive note as AIA's Architecture Billings Index (ABI) score rose to 54.7, its highest January score since 2007. Any score over 50 indicates an increase in billings. —*American Institute of Architects*
- Data from the Canadian Housing Statistics Program (CHSP) revealed that non-residents owned 3.4 percent of all residential properties in the Toronto census metropolitan area (CMA), while the value of these properties accounted for 3.0 percent of the total residential property value in that metropolitan area. In the Vancouver CMA, non-residents owned 4.8 percent of residential properties, accounting for 5.1 percent of total residential property value. —*CHSP*
- The Construction Union Wage Rate Index (including supplements) for Canada remained unchanged in January compared with the previous month. The composite index increased 1.0 percent in the 12 months to January. —*Statistics Canada*
- Housing starts in Canada were higher in 2017 than predicted by the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC) at the start of last year. Housing starts increased 12 percent compared to 2016, based on preliminary starts data for December 2017. Multi-family construction grew 16 percent in 2017, while single-family starts increased 5 percent. —*CMHC*
- U.S. housing starts were up 2.4 percent in 2017 compared to 2016. Total housing starts were 1.2 million in 2017. —*U.S. Department of Commerce*
- According to eMarketer estimates, global retail e-commerce sales reached \$2.3 trillion US in 2017, a 23.2 percent increase over the previous year. The mobile share of this stood at 58.9 percent, or \$1.4 trillion US. In 2021, mobile e-commerce could rake in some \$3.5 trillion US and then make up 72.9 percent of e-commerce sales. —*Statista*
- European furniture suppliers' production value has reached nearly €88 billion, accounting for around one fourth of the world's furniture industry, which is half the Asian one. This amount is reflected by 81 out of the top 200 furniture manufacturers worldwide being located in Europe. —*CSIL*
- The Global Consumer Survey 2018 has revealed that 63 percent of U.S. adults say they pay particular attention to brands when buying smartphones — more than for any other category, including fashion (53 percent) and food/drinks (42 percent). —*Statista*
- Malaysia's timber exports are expected to increase 5 percent this year from the 23.22 billion RM in 2017. There are issues facing the timber sector, however, with shortages of both raw materials and skilled workers. —*ITTO*
- In January 2018, Brazilian exports of wood products (except pulp and paper) increased 28.8 percent in value compared to January 2017, from \$183.7 million US to \$236.6 million US. —*ITTO*
- It has been reported by the China General Administration of Customs (GAC) that the value of China's 2017 foreign trade rose 14.2 percent year on year to \$4.28 trillion US, bringing to an end the previous two yearly consecutive declines. —*China GAC*
- The total value of European Union imports of wood products was €18.17 billion in 2017, 2.4 percent more than in 2016. This followed an increase of 1.3 percent to €17.74 billion in 2016. In 2017, EU import value was at the highest level since 2008 — just before the global financial crises. —*Eurostat*
- The U.S. imported \$18.5 billion US worth of wooden furniture in 2017, 11 percent more than in 2016. Imports from all key supplier countries increased. China accounted for 47 percent of all wooden furniture imports in 2017, followed by Vietnam with 20 percent. The strongest growth rate was in imports from Vietnam and India. —*ITTO*

March 28 – 31
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 Guangzhou, China
www.interzum-guangzhou.com

April 11 – 14
NWFA Expo
 Tampa, Fla.
www.nwfaexpo.org

April 14 – 18
High Point Market
 Charlotte, N.C.
www.highpointmarket.org

April 17 – 22
EuroCucina
 Milan, Italy
salonemilano.it/en-us/EXHIBITORS/EuroCucina

May 1 – 4
Woodworking Industry Conference
 Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii
www.wmia.org/events/

May 8 – 12
Xylexpo
 Milan, Italy
www.xylexpo.com

May 10 – 13
CKCA National Forum
 Niagara Falls, Ont.
www.ckca.ca

May 25 – 27
Canadian Furniture Show
 Toronto, Ont.
www.canadianfurnitureshow.com

May 31 – June 2
AWMAC National Convention
 Edmonton, Alta.
www.awmac.com

June 11 – 13
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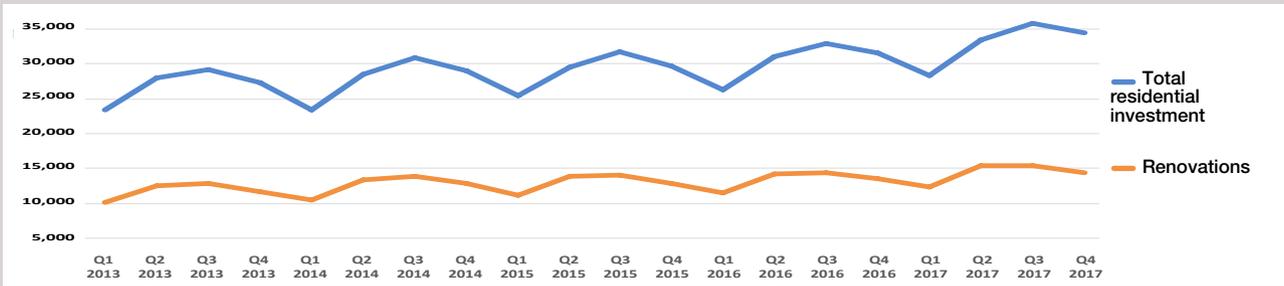
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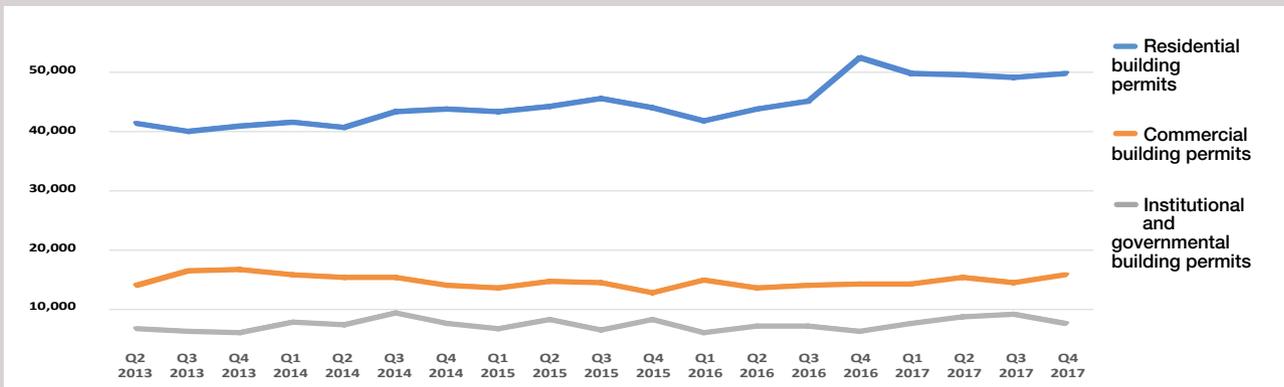


By the numbers

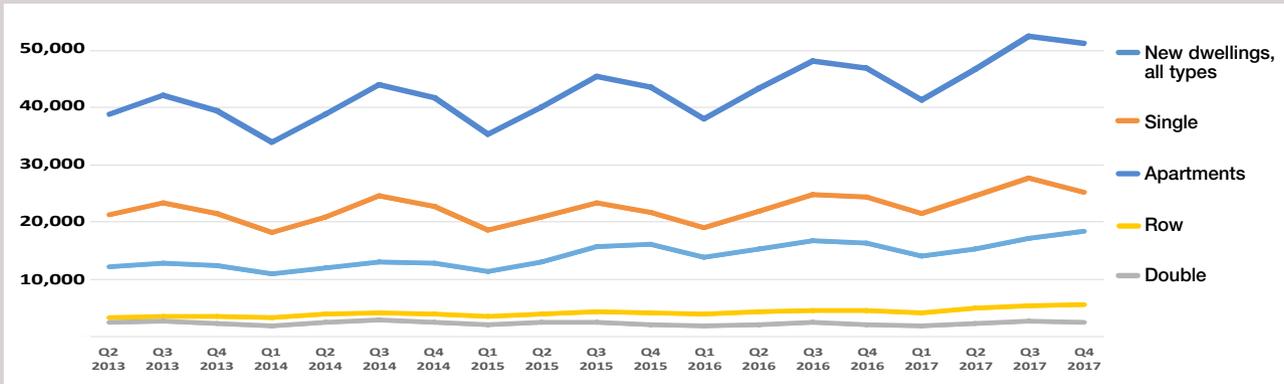
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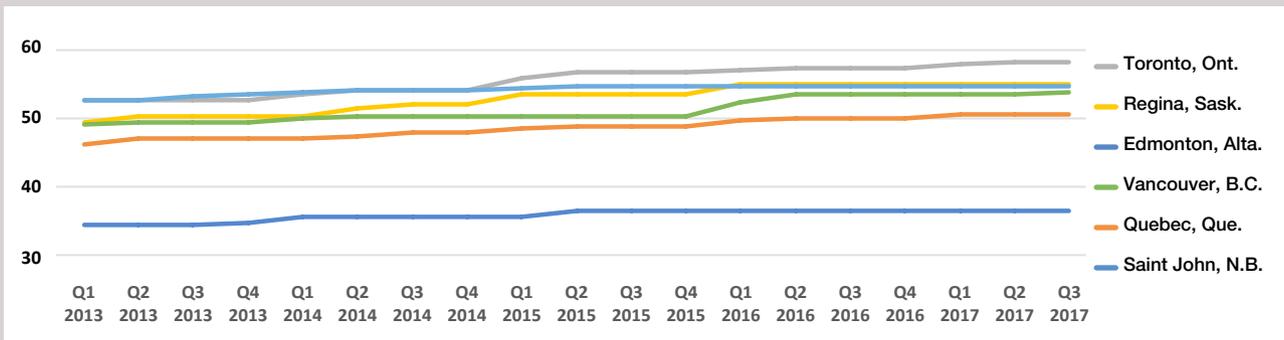
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25-523-5	14"
25-524-0	16"
25-524-5	18"
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25-525-5	22"
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