

Marketing for Wood Products Companies

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Marketing: Why it is Vital to Your Firm

No matter the size of the company, the principles of marketing applied properly can improve one's profitability. Marketing is an evolutionary process that links firms to customers. Marketing encourages the exchange of goods and services for money in a way that is profitable to the firm and satisfying to the customer. The marketing process is constantly being adjusted and tailored to different situations based on three strategic business factors: the company, the customers, and the competition. It is important that wood products' organizations and their managers be aware of how these three factors interact and constantly adjust business strategy.

It must never be over-looked that marketing is the income generating activity of the firm. Marketing is also the function of the firm that reaches out to customers and communicates with them. Regardless of how good the product is, without acquiring satisfied customers, and the business that they generate, wood products' firms will not be able to operate at their optimal profitability level. Marketing is the mechanism through which this can be achieved.

OK, so it's important, but WHAT IS IT?

Somewhere around the time all garbage collectors became sanitation engineers and all janitors became maintenance supervisors, a funny thing happened to a lot of sales people: they became marketing managers, marketing engineers and marketing associates, and some even became marketing representatives. (Blake, 1983)

This quote helps to illustrate just how misunderstood and misused the term marketing really is. It is hard to define and includes such functions as sales, distribution, pricing, promotion, products, and many others. Here is an example of a definition which attempts to encapsulate the many different aspects of marketing: "Marketing is the discovery or identification of needs and the execution of those activities necessary to plan and provide need-satisfying products and services and to price, promote, distribute, and effect exchange of these products at an acceptable cost and in a socially responsible manner" (Shaw and Semenik, 1985).

There are many definitions similar to this one which try to capture everything which marketing actually involves. Most, however, fall short. Others would like to believe that marketing is simply promoting and selling a product. It must be realized that these are simply pieces of the puzzle. And we all know what happens when some of the pieces of a puzzle are lost or ignored; it just doesn't fit together. Another way to view marketing is as a philosophy - "a disciplined way of thinking about organizational goals and their relationship to overall business goals" (Ghosh 1988).

Because of the difficulty in defining this abstract concept called marketing, it is often thought of as a concept. This Marketing Concept is based on two simple objectives. The objectives are aimed at satisfying its customers, while making a profit (McCarthy and Perreault 1987). This is a fairly simple concept that is vital to the success of the firm. Unfortunately, marketing can be difficult at times to implement.

In upcoming sections, we will examine the main functional areas within marketing. Perhaps through a deeper understanding of these areas you will develop your own philosophy of what marketing is.

Markets

Markets are typically defined as all current and potential buyers of a product or service. A key assumption in this definition is that these buyers are able to financially make the purchase.

Marketing strategy is typically organized around target markets. These target markets are segments of the market toward which a firm targets its products or services. The markets can be segmented based on a variety of different characteristics, which can range from demographics to product application to geography.

There are three alternative methods used for defining target markets. They are mass marketing, niche marketing, and market segmentation. Each of these three techniques can be effective when used properly in the right situation for the right product. These methods are discussed in more detail below.

Mass Marketing

Mass marketing involves a single marketing program aimed at large numbers of customers with essentially the same product, promotion, etc. Mass marketing assumes that all customers have similar needs in relation to a particular product. It is rare to find mass marketing in the wood products industry. It is hard to achieve for smaller firms and few markets are that homogeneous. A couple of examples would be 3/8" sheathing products such as OSB and softwood plywood as well as SPF No. 2 and better studs.

Niche Marketing

The opposite of mass marketing is niche marketing. With this technique, a particular group of customers is concentrated on and given specialized attention. Marketing to this group is very focused. This can be a very effective method for smaller companies with limited financial resources. Creating a niche market can be achieved not only with the product, but also with specialized attributes and services as well. These markets generally bring a price premium. Examples of these are specialty hardwood boards for the do-it-yourself homeowner market or environmentally labeled green products.

Market Segmentation

Somewhere in between mass and niche marketing is market segmentation. This essentially means taking the

overall group of customers and breaking them up into similar smaller groups. Products and marketing activities are generally focused on two or more well defined groups.

A good example of this type of strategy is used by the hardwood lumber industry. Hardwood lumber comes in different grades. These different grades are marketed toward different market segments. Generally, higher grade lumber goes to furniture and cabinet manufacturers, while lower grade lumber is used by flooring and pallet manufacturers.

Characteristics of Effective Segmentation:

- People in segment differ from those not in segment
- People in segment are similar enough to develop a marketing program
- Segment must be large enough to be economical
- Segment must be reachable
- Product needs of customers in segment must be easily defined and different from others

Risks of Market Segmentation

- Market segments are too small
- Market segments are not accessible
- Market segment is shrinking
- Segment is open to strong competition

Approaches to Market Segmentation

- Geographical:
 - International
 - National
 - Regional
- Customer Class:
 - Professional Home Builders
 - Do-it-Yourselfers
 - Light Commercial Construction
- Products:
 - Furniture Parts
 - Windows
 - Plywood Sheathing

- Product Attributes:

- Moisture Content
 - Price
 - Dimensional Requirements

- Demographics:

- Age
- Income
- Gender

Product

Total Product Concept

Firms should never be so shortsighted as to think they only provide customers with a physical product. In today's marketplace it takes more than that to compete. Customers expect more. Customers no longer view the physical product in isolation from the services associated with that product. Often services can be a deciding factor when choosing among firms providing a commodity product such as softwood lumber. When considering products such as softwood or hardwood lumber, for example, it is critical to consider things like credit, service, quality and delivery. Not only is the customer concerned that they are getting a bundle of #1 Common Red Oak, but also that they will be extended the credit they need and can count on the wood being there when they need it.

This view is known as the **total product concept** (TPC). The concept includes all of the intangibles and extras that are both perceived and paid for by the customer. Adhering to this total product concept is a good way for firms to differentiate their product through attributes other than just price. The TPC is especially true in the commodity market, where price is often used as the only method of differentiation. When asked to rate the importance of a variety of product/service characteristics to the quality of the softwood lumber they buy, buyers rated many non-product characteristics (service characteristics) as high as product characteristics. For example, consistent, on schedule delivery was considered more important than overall lumber appearance!

Another great example of this total product concept is illustrated by up-scale restaurants. Let's face it, a USDA grade A choice cut steak is just that, regardless of where you get it. However, atmosphere, superior service, and prestige might be reasons for eating that steak at an up-scale restaurant. The list of reasons could go on much further, but the key here is that the primary

reason to go there is for the product - the food. However, the total product including all of the intangibles and extras is what is actually evaluated, and paid for, by the customer.

Types of Products

- Commodity Products
 - Competition primarily on price.
 - Standard industry product line.
 - Mass marketing.
- Specialty Products
 - Compete by best meeting customer needs.
 - Customized products.
 - Targeted to market niche.
- Differentiated Products
 - Variations of standard products for targeted customer groups.
 - Evolutionary process from specialty to commodity product.

Product Positioning

Creating a favorable image of your product in the minds of customers is very important. If you can positively position your product in relation to a competitor's products, it offers an advantage. This is known as product positioning. This can be achieved in many ways. Some products are known for their superior quality, others for durability. A good example of product positioning in the wood products industry is Truss Joist's silent floor system. Many consumers view this as the top of the line flooring system, and request "the stuff with the elephant on it." This example also illustrates the benefits of product branding in that customers associate the elephant with the Truss Joist silent floor system.

Distribution

"If farms and factories are the heart of industrial America, distribution networks are its circulatory system." (Corey et al. 1989)

This statement helps to show how vital distribution is to the industrial sector. Without proper distribution, products have no way of reaching the ultimate consumer. Distribution systems are organized into channels. These channels are an organized set of institutions whose goal is to move goods from point of manufac-

ture to point of consumption. The institutions that exist within these distribution channels are known as intermediaries or middlemen.

Functions of Middlemen/Channel Intermediaries

These intermediaries or *middlemen* serve many important functions, some of which are listed below:

- Maintain contact with buyer
- Negotiate price and delivery
- Establish contracts and delivery
- Transfer title
- Provide credit/collection
- Service product and provide other services
- Provide inventory/storage
- Arrange transportation

As you can see the *middleman* serves a number of functions that the individual firm would be hard pressed to handle itself. This is because individual firms specialize and are experts in the specific function they perform. As you know, there are many channels through which lumber and other sawmill products move on their way to the final consumer. An individual sawmiller would have a tough time being an expert in all these different markets.

Who are these Intermediaries?

The majority of these intermediaries can be divided into two broad groups. These are Agents and Merchants. The main difference between the two is that agents typically do not take title to the goods they handle. Merchants, on the other hand, usually do take title to the products they sell. Some specific examples are shown below:

- Agents
 - Brokers
 - Manufacturer's Rep
- Merchants
 - Reload Centers
 - Lumber Trading Companies/Office Wholesaler
 - Wholesaler/Distribution Yard
 - Industrial Distributor
 - Jobber

Channel Strategies

Selecting the appropriate channel strategy for your products is a very important aspect of marketing. This is especially true today, where competition exists even between alternate channels, i.e., the entire channel is a competitive unit. Some examples of different channel decisions faced by organizations are shown below:

- Go direct or use intermediaries?
- Distribution intensity? (exclusive or intensive?)
- Channel ownership? (independent or captive?)

The selected channel strategy should always match up with the overall marketing objectives in order to be successful and achieve the firm's overall goals. Choosing the right channel strategy can be a difficult task. Many firms experiment with different strategies over the course of time before finding the best fit for that particular market. They may use a different strategy for a different market.

Physical Distribution/Logistics

The actual physical handling and subsequent delivery of products represents a significant portion of total costs of goods. In this area it is important to keep a healthy balance between two important concepts, Total product concept and Total cost concept. We recall that the total product concept was mentioned earlier. Costs are clearly important as well and the total cost concept seeks to maximize the effectiveness of the entire distribution channel, rather than one piece at-a-time. No stock-outs may maximize service, but typically at an unacceptable cost.

Additional Factors Influencing Channel Choice

Another important decision in channel strategy needs to be made regarding channel length. Whether or not it is best for your company to use longer channels (multiple intermediaries) or shorter channels (one or two intermediaries, possibly direct) depends on the product and situation. Some general guidelines to aid you in this decision are set up in Table 1.

Pricing

Pricing is a complex process that is important to the success of a company. Price is the amount of money that is charged for a product or service. However, there is much more involved in setting a price than this. The

Circumstance	Short	Long
# of Potential customers	Small	Large
Geographic concentration	Highly concentrated	Widely dispersed
Order size per transaction	Large \$ value	Small \$ value
Complexity of product	Complex, requiring service	Simple
Product quality maintenance	Much control required	Little control required
Company resources	Adequate	Inadequate
Middlemen availability	Inadequate	Adequate

price of a product has to include a number of variables in addition to just the product cost. For instance, when a load of lumber is purchased the price charged must be sufficient to cover the following costs: the cost of producing the actual product, marketing that product, transportation, packaging, insurance, and any necessary taxes. It is also necessary to consider company objectives when arriving at a price. As you can see, pricing can be a very complicated process that is affected by many different variables. It is important for the individuals in charge of this task to understand how to account for these factors when setting a price.

Basic Considerations

Certainly the costs of developing, manufacturing, and distributing a product are substantial contributors to the final price. It is important to realize, however, that there are also some non-cost factors that have an effect on price setting. These factors are listed below with brief explanations of their relevance.

Price Elasticity: This relates to customer reactions to pricing changes. If a change in price results in a large change in demand, then it is referred to as highly elastic demand. If a change in price results in little or no change in demand, it is referred to as inelastic demand. This is largely dependent on urgency of need and availability of substitutes. For example, as steel studs become more accepted in the construction industry, the demand for wood studs becomes more elastic.

Impact of Wholesalers and Retailers: The distribution channel also has an effect on pricing. Prices must be set so that members of the distribution channel for that product can make a profit as well. In general, longer channels afford less control over price to the manufacturer, while shorter channels provide more control.

Competitive Environment: This also relates to the amount of control the manufacturer has over price. If you are operating in a market-controlled price environment there is little control over pricing. High competition and similar products are characteristic of this type of environment. This is very common in the wood products industry and the case for most commodity markets such as plywood sheathing and photocopy paper. If you are operating in a company-controlled environment there is strong control over pricing. Moderate competition and highly differentiated products are characteristic of this type of environment. This is usually the case in markets with high product differentiation such as specialty custom cabinets and furniture.

Pricing Objectives

Setting a price is also partly a function of what direction the company is trying to take. For this reason it is good to decide on certain pricing objectives. This will help to clarify what role pricing is to play in overall corporate strategy. The three basic pricing objectives, with short explanations, are listed below.

Profit-oriented: This objective concerns profit maximization or target rate of return on either investment or sales. This is often used early in the product life cycle before intense competition develops and price has not yet become the major focus for product differentiation. One important consideration with this objective is whether to aim for long-term or short-term profit maximization.

Sales-oriented: This objective concerns increasing sales and/or market share. This is often used when companies are trying to get a foothold for achieving long-term success through increasing market share.

Status quo-oriented: This objective is simply concerned with meeting competition. Normally, in markets domi-

nated by this objective, there is a price leader who sets a price and the competition follows their lead. A good example of this is in the paper industry.

Pricing Strategies

Once the appropriate pricing objective has been determined, it is time to begin the process of determining a price. There are three basic pricing strategies that can be used. These are cost-based strategies, demand-based strategies, and competition-based strategies. Each of these three strategies determines price based on different variables and inputs. A short explanation of each is given below.

Cost-based: Basically cost-based methods determine price based on the costs associated with bringing the product to the market. These costs can be considered from different perspectives. Three of these commonly used methods are markup pricing, target return pricing, and break even pricing.

Demand-based: This type of strategy determines the price of the product based on what the market is willing to pay. The price of producing the product is still important and determines the minimal acceptable price. However, often customer value/quality associations and perceptions allow for a higher margin to be obtained than when using a set cost-based strategy. Perceived-value and price/quality association pricing are examples of this type of strategy. This is often used with specialty type products.

Competition-based: Competitor pricing is the basis for pricing with this strategy. This is largely observed in commodity type markets. Firms need to realize it is possible in this situation to create some extra value for their product and gain a price premium. They may use status quo type pricing where they use one of the many published wood product price lists. This is rare, however, because it is believed price is the sole determinant in the buying decision, which is not true.

Another strategy that can be used concurrently with one of those discussed above is price adjustments. Basically this involves giving discounts on price for various reasons. Generally, this is done for large purchase volumes, seasonal reasons, or to compensate channel intermediaries for covering costs such as freight and storage.

What The Industry Really Does

Most wood products companies use some form of markup pricing. This has the advantage of being relatively simple in theory. The problem is many companies are not sure of exactly what all of their costs are.

Larger commodity producers generally use some form of status quo type pricing. This is normally based on industry figures from publications such as Random Lengths or the Hardwood Market Review.

What does this mean for you? Well, it is important to remember that pricing practices should both fit into and help determine overall company strategy. Setting the right price is important to the success of any firm. Try not to use price as the focal point of differentiation efforts. It is always possible to add value to your product through some non-price attribute. This will help to set your company apart from the competition in the minds of customers and help create the opportunity for a price premium.

Promotion

Any personal or non-personal communication that creates a favorable disposition toward a good, service, or idea in the mind of the recipient of the communication. (Shaw and Semenik 1985)

This is a very appropriate definition of promotion. Many times promotion is misunderstood as only selling. Selling is only part of it. The key objectives of promotion are to inform, persuade, and/or remind. This is accomplished by communicating information about a product or service that will create a favorable impression in the minds of the recipients of this communication.

There are many different tools available to help communicate this message. These tools fall into four different categories that make up the promotional mix. Advertising, Personal Selling, Sales Promotion, and Publicity are the categories that make up this mix.

Advertising

Advertising is a paid form of non-personal presentation of a good, service, or idea. It is probably the most familiar form of promotion. Each of us sees hundreds of advertisements everyday. The ability to reach a large audience at a relatively low price is one of the positives of advertising. One of the drawbacks, as we all know, is that advertisements are easily ignored.

Advertising can be done through many different types of media. These can include:

- Radio
- TV
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Billboards
- Direct Mail
- Business Cards
- Letterhead

Personal Selling

Personal selling is a person-to-person presentation of information about a firm's products or services. This type of promotion is used often in the wood products industry. It has many advantages over other forms of promotion.

First, the message can be tailored to each individual customer. Second, it is possible to receive immediate feedback. This is important because it gives company representatives a chance to become problem solvers as well. It is in this area that skilled sales representatives can create a great advantage for a company. Finally, personal selling is effective because people like dealing face to face - it helps to create peace of mind.

Personal selling has disadvantages as well. It is very expensive when examined on a per contact basis. Also, because there are only so many hours in the day, the total number of contacts is limited. It should be noted, however, that personal selling has the highest success per contact rate of any form of promotion.

Sales Promotion

Sales promotion is a non-personal communication in the form of free samples, coupons, point-of-purchase literature, trade shows, contests, etc. Trade shows have become a very good way to promote products within the industry. They happen quite frequently and are normally well attended. This is an especially effective way to introduce newer products. The yearly High Point furniture show is a good example of the magnitude some trade shows can obtain. It is attended by nearly every furniture manufacturer and thousands of visitors.

Publicity

Publicity includes non-paid methods of disseminating information about the firm, its products and services.

Different examples of this would be news releases, articles in trade magazines, or newspaper articles. Publicity is often achieved with new plant openings, new product developments, and recent environmental improvements to new or existing manufacturing facilities. This can be a valuable method for creating positive public perception of your firm.

An effective promotional program can include all or any combination of the promotional mix. Whatever combination is selected must achieve the following; getting the correct message to the correct audience through the correct media.

Choosing the Right Message

Choosing the right message can be a difficult process. The first thing you have to consider is what your main objective is. It may be to inform, persuade, remind, or any combination of these. The message will depend on the product, the buying situation, and the customer.

For instance, if the product you are marketing is relatively new and early in the product life cycle, your objectives are probably to inform and persuade. An example of this would be environmentally certified or green products. An effective way of doing this could be trade shows, advertisements in trade journals, or personal selling.

If the product that is being marketed is well established and in the middle to later stages of the product life cycle, the objective could be to remind customers of your company and product. Attempting to persuade potential customers to switch to your product from competitor's products could also be a goal to gain market share in a stagnate market. An example of this could be large commodity markets such as 2 x 4 studs and panel products. This can be effectively accomplished using advertisements in the appropriate media in order to remind, and personal selling as a way to persuade.

It is important to select the correct media to use for a promotional program. The media is the connection between the audience and the message. No matter how good the message is, if it does not reach the intended audience it is worthless.

Marketing Research

Gathering information on potential markets is often overlooked by wood products firms. This can be important when attempting to determine whether cer-

tain markets are attractive for entry. Good marketing research can prevent premature attempts to enter a market that should not have been entered in the first place. A little bit of extra time spent up front can save a lot of wasted time and money in the long run. There are many sources from which this type of information can be obtained.

Get Out and Look Around

One simple way to get an idea of what is happening in certain markets is to go out and see for yourself. Visiting local home centers and retailers that carry wood products can provide lots of useful information. You can observe how products similar to yours are being marketed. Discussions with store managers can also help to gain insight on what's selling and what's not.

Attending trade shows can be a good source of information as well. It provides an opportunity to create new contacts and observe what the competition is doing. It also affords an opportunity to discuss new market preferences with knowledgeable individuals.

Trade Associations and Trade Publications

Trade associations can be a valuable source of market information. These exist for nearly every major wood product. These associations often have market analysts who are available to assist member companies. They also normally publish economic market reports and have newsletters with updated market information pertaining to their specific industry.

Trade publications such as Southern Lumberman and the Northern Logger and Timber Processor contain useful information also. These publications generally update prices and market information in weekly or monthly newsletters. Specific market reports or directories can also be purchased from certain organizations.

Government

U.S. and state governments can be a helpful source of information. U.S. and state forest service agencies often publish market reports and offer marketing assistance to companies. Some of the major land grant universities have a forest products department that often has Extension specialists available for consultation. For the most part, information obtained through government entities is free of charge. There is a listing of different

U.S. and state government sources of information in Appendix 1.

Locating Customers

Locating customers can be a difficult process. This is especially true for smaller firms or new firms. Below are some suggestions to assist in the identification of potential customers.

Word-of-Mouth and References

Have you ever gone to a certain service station to have your car worked on because a friend recommended it? Or contacted a certain contractor to inquire about remodeling your kitchen because you liked the job he/she did on your neighbor's kitchen? This demonstrates the power of word-of-mouth. This may be an important way to gain new customers. To accomplish this, it is necessary to obtain a satisfied customer base and develop a good reputation. Good references come from providing quality products and reliable service to new customers. First impressions are hard to change. Loyal, satisfied customers will often recommend your firm to their friends. Satisfied customers may also be used as references for potential customers.

Yellow Pages

The yellow pages are a tool that might be used to work both ways. Not only can it help you to locate potential customers, but also it provides a way for potential customers to locate you. For instance, if you were targeting your product to local hardware stores, a simple turn of the pages to the appropriate section immediately gives you a list of potential customers. From the other perspective, a well written ad in the yellow pages can create a lot of business opportunities. Just think of how often you use the yellow pages to locate or identify places of business.

Direct Sales

This is a direct and effective method for finding and acquiring potential customers. It involves directly approaching possible users of your product. It is often effective to provide either samples of or literature about your product or service. These samples or literature should be accompanied by a business card with information on how to get in touch with your firm.

For example, suppose your firm produced customized cabinets or mouldings. You could approach contractors or kitchen repair & remodeling specialists with samples of your product offering. This may not result in a sale every time but it gets your product and name circulating within the industry.

Another method for your company would be to develop a simple web page on the Internet. There are numerous texts and web sites that can assist a company in promoting their products directly to consumers. You may also want to link to other sites which may assist you in promoting or selling your merchandise.

Summary

The wood products industry is changing. We face new forms of competition from within our own industry and from other products. Plastics and steel now directly compete in traditional wood markets. Engineered wood products are taking away market share from what were solid wood markets for construction lumber. Oriented Strand Board (OSB) now is the leading structural panel being produced. International competition is greater than ever. Hardwood furniture from American species is being made in China and Mexico and sold back in the US at competitive prices. Reconstituted veneers have the potential to compete aggressively in traditional solid wood veneer markets. Radiata Pine from Latin America and New Zealand now is readily available in the US for many applications. Other countries recognize that we are the largest consumer of wood products in the world. American wood products producers need to continually monitor and adjust their markets to meet the changing needs of the consumer.

In summary, marketing is a primary determinant of company success. Only by properly identifying what customers want and need on a continual basis, can wood products firms be successful. Competition will only increase in the years ahead. Those companies that have a good understanding of markets and implement a well thought out marketing program to meet their needs will have an advantage in the 21st Century.

Appendix: Marketing Information

No one article or brochure can provide all the information necessary to effectively develop a good marketing program for your company. A few additional sources of information for your wood products firm include:

Reference Books

Forest Product Marketing by Dr. Steven Sinclair. Published by McGraw-Hill in 1992.

A Marketing Guide for Manufacturers and Entrepreneurs of Secondary Processed Wood Products in the Northeastern United States by Ed Cesa. U.S.D.A. Forest Service publication # NA-TP-09-92.

Marketing Forest Products by Jean Mater, S.M. Mater, and C. Mater. Published by Miller-Freeman, Inc. in 1992.

Management Guidelines for Sawmill Operators by David E. Tooch. Published by University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension Service in 1982.

Value-Added Wood Products: Manufacturing and Marketing Strategies by Ed M. Williston. Published by Miller-Freeman, Inc. in 1991.

Commonwealth of Virginia Agencies

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1650 Ramble Road - Mail Code 0503
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Blacksburg, VA 24061
Dr. Bob Smith, Associate Professor/Extension Specialist
Phone: 540-231-5876

Virginia Department of Forestry

P.O. Box 3758
Charlottesville, VA 22903
Phone: 804-977-1375

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Division of Marketing
Commonwealth of Virginia
1100 Bank St; Suite 907
Richmond, VA 23219
Phone: 804-786-3953

Virginia Economic Development Partnership

P.O. Box 798
901 East Byrd Street
Richmond, VA 23218-0798
Phone: 804-371-0662

Virginia Department of Business Assistance

707 East Main Street
Suite 300
Richmond, VA 23219
Phone: 804-371-0488

Market Reports and Directories

U.S. Industrial Outlook for the current year. Published annually by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20402.

Standard & Poor's Industry Surveys. This source examines industries and their environment, including trends and problems.

Regional Business Directory and Industry Specific Directory(s)

Dun and Bradstreet Information Services
3 Sylvan Way
Parsippany, NJ 07054-3896
Phone: 201 605-6700

U.S. Dept. of Commerce. For data on consumers, businesses, and virtually anything you can think of, the source with the most information is the U.S. Dept. of Commerce. Publications include:

- Census of the population
- Economic census
- Census of housing
- County business patterns
- Census tract reports
- Survey of current business
- "Measuring Markets: A Guide to the Use of Federal and State Statistical Data"

Directories of Manufacturers (by state)

Commerce Register, Inc.
190 Goldwin Avenue
Midland Park, NJ 07432
Phone: 201 445-3000

Encyclopedia of Associations. Provides details on over 19,500 national associations.
Gale Research
835 Penobscott Building
Detroit, Michigan 48226-4094
Phone: 800 877-4253; 313 961-2242

Directory of the Forest Products Industry

Miller-Freeman Publications
500 Howard Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
Phone: 415 905-2200

Green Book Ç Hardwood Lumber Market Directory

Miller Publishing Co.
1235 Sycamore View
P.O. Box 34908
Memphis, TN 38184-0908

Trade Journals

Wood & Wood Products
P.O. Box A-3844
Chicago, IL 60690-9952
Fax: 312 922-3165
Web site: www.iswonline.com

Pallet Enterprise

Industrial Reporting, Inc.
1893-D1 Billingsgate Circle
Richmond, VA 23233-4239
Phone: 804 740-1567
Fax: 804 740-2826
Web site: www.palletenterprise.com

CabinetMaker and Furniture Design and Manufacture

Chartwell Communications, Inc.
380 E. Northwest Highway, Suite 300
Des Plaines, IL 60016-2208
Phone: 847 390-6700
Fax: 847 390-7100
Web site: www.cabinetmag.com

Southern Lumberman

Hatton-Brown Publishers, Inc.
225 Hanrick St.
Montgomery, AL 36104
Phone: 800 669-5613
Fax: 334 834-4525
Web site: www.southernlumberman.com
e-mail: subscribe@hattonbrown.com

The Northern Logger and Timber Processor

NL Publishing Inc.
PO Box 69
Old Forge, NY 13420-0069
Phone: 315-369-3736
e-mail: NELA@TELENET.NET

The Logger and Lumberman

S/K Publishing Group
257 North Main
Wadley, GA 30477
Phone: 1-800-634-1261
e-mail: Loglumber@JeffersonEnergy.com

Trade Associations

National Hardwood Lumber Assoc.
P.O. Box 34518
Memphis, TN 38184-0518
Phone: 800 933-0318
Web site: www.natllhardwood.org
Email: info@natllhardwood.org

Hardwood Manufacturers Assoc.

Suite 205, Building B
2831 Airways Boulevard
Memphis, TN 38132
Phone: 901 346-2222
Fax: 901 346-2233
Web site: www.hardwood.org

Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc.

P.O. Box 427
High Point, NC 47261
Phone: 919 885-8315
Fax: 919 886-8865
Web site: www.woodcom.com/woodcom/ahmi/index.html

Virginia Forest Products Assoc.

P.O. Box 160
Sandston, VA 23150-0160
Phone: 804 737-5625
Fax: 804 737-9437
e-mail: vfpa@worldnet.att.net

Southern Forest Products Assoc.

P.O. Box 641700
Kenner, LA 70064-1700
Phone: 504 443-4464
Fax: 504 443-6612
Web site: www.southernpine.com

Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association

671 Forest Parkway
Forest Park, GA 30297
Phone: (404) 361-1445
Fax: (404) 361-5963
Web site: www.slma.org

Wood Component Manufacturers Association

1000 Johnson Ferry Road
Suite A-130
Marietta, GA 30068
Phone: 770-565-6660
Web site: www.woodcomponents.org

Price Reports

Weekly Hardwood Review and Hardwood Review Export
Hardwood pricing information
P.O. Box 471307
Charlotte, NC 28247-1307
Phone: 800 638-7206
Fax: 800 444-2230
Web site: www.hardwoodreview.com

Hardwood Market Report. Lumber News Letter

P.O. Box 241325
Memphis, TN 38124-1325
Phone: 901 767-9126
Fax: 901 767-7534
Web site: www.hmr.com

Wood Markets Quarterly. International Solid Wood Report

Suite 501-543 Granville Street
Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6C 1X8
Phone: 604 801-5998 (country code 1)
Fax: 604 801-5997
Web site: www.woodmarkets.com

Random Lengths Yardstick and Random Lengths Export

P.O. Box 867
Eugene, OR 97440-0867
Phone: 541 686-9925
Fax: 800 874-7979
Web site: www.randomlengths.com

Websites

Steve Schook's Directory of Forest Products, Wood Science, and Marketing
Web site: www.forestdirectory.com

Lumber Quest

Web site: www.lumberquest.hollowww.com

Lumber Trader

Web site: www.Lumber-Trader.com

Center for Forest Products Marketing and Management

Web site: www.vtwood.forprod.vt.edu/cfpmm/index.htm

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