

Industry Focus

SOFTWARE VENDOR BRINGS FREE HELP SESSIONS TO CUSTOMERS

Instead of requiring customers to travel to its headquarters for training, **HCSS**, a developer of construction estimating and field management software, offers free help sessions, called "Helpinars," in or near its customer's cities. Since launching the program in 2007, hundreds of executives, estimators, project managers, and office personnel have attended more than 25 Helpinars throughout the U.S. and Canada. HCSS implementation and support specialists are available to individual companies in prearranged 60 to 90 minute blocks of time to answer questions, address issues, explain new ways to use products, and demonstrate what's new. HCSS plans to offer Helpinars indefinitely. Visit www.helpinar.com for more information.

EMPLOYER RECOGNIZED FOR FLEXIBLE WORKPLACE PRACTICES

The Salt River Materials Group (SRMG) corporate office has been named a winner of the 2009 Alfred P. Sloan Award for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility, distinguishing it as a leading practitioner of workplace flexibility and effectiveness. The Sloan Awards are part of the When Work Works project, an ongoing initiative of Families and Work Institute, the Institute for a Competitive Workforce (an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce), and the Twiga Foundation. Through When Work Works, the partner organizations provide research, resources, and recognition to employers nationwide and share the results of research on creating effective and flexible workplaces that meet the needs of the twenty-first century. The awards recognize organizations that are striving to find new ways to make work "work" in today's challenging economy.

SRMG manufactures and markets the raw materials for concrete construction, an industry hit hard by the economic downturn. As a result, SRMG has asked employees to volunteer for reduced work weeks. The participating employees can reduce their work by a specified amount and for a determined period of time. They can choose to use paid time off for the time not worked or take it unpaid, reducing their pay amount without affecting other benefits. Many employees volunteered for the program and everyone is appreciative of this flexible option as an alternative to layoffs. Visit www.familiesandwork.org for more information.

PROMOTION OFFERS FREE TOOLS AND ACCESSORIES

Makita Industrial Power Tools has launched "Good-Bye Ni-CD, Get Into LXT Lithium-Ion Technology," a new national promotion offering select free tools and accessories with purchase. Customers can receive a range of value-added offers, with mail-in redemption for free bare tools (tool-only, no battery or charger included) and accessories with purchase of select LXT Series kits and combo kits. Free tools and accessories include an 18V LXT Lithium-Ion battery, BHP454Z Cordless 1/2 in. Hammer Driver-Drill, BTD141Z Cordless Impact Driver, and more. The promotion applies to purchases made through June 30, 2010. For more information, visit www.makitatools.com.

LAND DONATION FACILITATES NEW WATER TREATMENT PLANT

Ash Grove Cement Company has donated more than 80 acres (32 ha) of land to the city of Midlothian, TX, for a new water treatment plant. The state-of-the-art facility will be able to handle 6 to 9 million gal. (2.3 to 3.4 million L) of water per day and will include a 3 million gal. (1.1 million L) storage tank, high service pump station, transmission pipeline, office, and testing laboratory. Midlothian City Manager Don Hastings said, "We are extremely grateful to Ash Grove for donating land that will enable the city of Midlothian to move forward in building a facility that will use the best available technology to provide clean, safe drinking water for future generations of local residents. We very much appreciate Ash Grove's long track record of strong support to the community."

NEW DORMS PROVIDE SAFE HOUSING FOR FIREFIGHTERS

Royal Concrete Concepts (RCC), a manufacturer of preengineered concrete building systems, is adding eight dorm rooms to Fire Station #32 in Hobe Sound, FL. RCC's unique delivery system requires a smaller construction crew and fewer delivery trucks, minimizing disruptions and allowing the fire station to remain fully functional while work was completed. Highly energy efficient, RCC modular units can reduce heating and cooling costs by up to 20%. Engineered with concrete, polystyrene, and reinforced steel, they can withstand very strong winds. The dorms arrived fully compatible with the fire station's telephone, communication, emergency, and other systems. The 5000 ft² (465 m²) addition also included two bathrooms.