



## **NAFCD: Working Hard to Bring You the Best Event**

*By Bob Wagner*

For three special days in November, the North American Association of Floor Covering Distributors will be breaking with tradition. Don't worry, the NAFCD annual conference will continue to offer you everything you value about it – networking, education, the Distributor Marketplace – but what is changing is that NAFCD will be joining another leading organization, the North American Building Material Distribution Association (NBMDA) for this year's conference.

Held November 16-18 at The Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs, Colo., this joint event will feature a unique blend of networking functions, distribution management education, exhibits and business-to-business appointments while keeping the same feel of the conference that you know and value.

NAFCD members will have the opportunity to network with distributors in the building materials industry, and use this opportunity to expand your knowledge and experience. We will be able to visit with peers and suppliers in a related field, who do not often compete directly with us. These companies distribute products to the same construction sites and jobs where products are offered – while our customers may be different, our problems are similar.

In addition to the annual meeting, NAFCD is also conducting its fifth annual Distributor Marketplace, a face-to-face environment designed to make buying and selling easier and more efficient for manufacturers and distributors. The convention paired with the Distributor Marketplace offers a unique avenue of opportunity that fosters the exchange of ideas and solutions among industry peers. Currently, it is the only event of its kind in the industry, and it has been well-received since its inception.

Because of your support, our NAFCD leadership has been refining the show and making every effort to provide a more valuable experience. You might recall the ICI shows of years ago that fell short of providing value to the membership. NAFCD leadership knows that having a show for the sake of having a show is not what our members want. By joining with the NBMDA, we will be able to enhance your experience by providing an atmosphere where you can visit with suppliers who are selling in a related industry. The expanded show will also provide an opportunity to learn how others see and deal with issues and problems with related customers.

Business Enhancement Day, a popular feature of our conference where manufacturers can hold private meetings, training sessions and social events during non-compete hours, will continue at this year's convention on Tuesday, November Nov 16. Also in place are the annual Industry Leadership Panel and the always-popular roundtable sessions.

As you know, one of the core pillars of value for our organization is education. Building our relationship with the NBMDA will allow us to expand our educational offering by providing a

more diverse group to interact with. Also, by pooling our resources, we will be able to attract the finest quality speakers for our general sessions.

Another NAFCD core pillar of value is networking. Our ability to meet with distributors in the building materials industry to discuss issues, products and personnel should prove to be of great value. Every year we receive comments that our members want more networking time, and we intend to go above and beyond to meet that request.

During the planning stages of NAFCD's 2010 conference, we were intent on keeping our organization and its values in place. We want to make something clear: NAFCD is NOT becoming part of another organization; it is sharing in costs while attempting to improve the conference experience. One of the great things about your association is that your NAFCD leadership WANTS to hear from you before, during, and after the conference. We value our members' opinions, and it is our intent to exceed your expectations for value and content in a conference. We will all learn from our conference this year – what will YOU take away?

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