What Is WEMCO and Why Should I Join?

Since the two questions above are always the first ones manufacturers ask when we approach them about joining our association, I thought I’d give you the answers.

The Welding Equipment Manufacturers Committee (WEMCO), a standing committee of the American Welding Society (AWS), is a group of more than 80 welding equipment manufacturers that was formed 15 years ago so manufacturers could promote, discuss, and improve the industry. Members meet annually in February for great networking and to hear first-rate speakers address pertinent topics affecting our industry. The intrinsic value is in meeting with top executives of various-sized manufacturers involved in the welding industry. Each member is given the opportunity to hear new ideas, share best practices, and network with some of the best minds in our industry. The highlight of the annual meeting is the economic forecast by renowned economist Alan Beaulieu of Industry Trends Research.

The value of membership cannot be overstated. Long-time WEMCO member Dave Marquard, CEO/owner of SuperFlash Compressed Gas Equipment, recently wrote, “My time and expenses have always been critical. Especially time. Time is really the only product and service that all of us have. If you are to be successful, or even just survive, you have to optimize every minute of it. WEMCO has helped me optimize it.”

Here’s what WEMCO members rely on:

• Exposure to the best networking in the welding industry.
• WEMCO’s annual meeting. Compelling topics, top-level presenters, and invaluable information about your company. This year’s meeting will be held in conjunction with the Resistance Welding Manufacturers Alliance (RWMA) at Saddlebrook Golf & Tennis Resort in Wesley Chapel, Fla. For more information, visit www.wemco.org.
• Participation in business forums and roundtables that provide workable options and better leveraging.
• Receiving quarterly newsletters, forecasting reports, and research from WEMCO’s leading economist.

WEMCO membership benefits extend the bounds of the annual meeting. WEMCO, along with the American Welding Society, continues to lead the way in promoting welding as a career. AWS via its new Careers in Welding Committee has made a huge investment in promoting the welding industry to high schools, Boy Scouts, and technical colleges. Its “Careers in Welding” mobile trailer tours the country to provide students an opportunity to learn about welding with virtual welding machines. WEMCO is proud to sponsor the Image of Welding Awards given annually to outstanding contributors and leaders in the fields of education, promotion, and individual excellence in welding at the FABTECH show.

John Stropki, chairman of Lincoln Electric, recently said, “If we, as welding equipment manufacturers, don’t promote our industry, who will? And, if we don’t, who will we sell our products to?”

For more information about WEMCO, contact Keila DeMoraes at AWS at kdemoraes@aws.org or (800/305) 443-9353, ext. 444. Isn’t it time you join the leaders from such companies as 3M Speedglas, Abicor Binzel, ESAB, Harris Products, Hypertherm, Jackson Safety/Kimberly Clark, Lincoln Electric, Miller Electric, Victor Technologies, to name only a few, and enjoy the benefits of being a member of WEMCO?

Robert E. Ranc Sr.
Past Chair, WEMCO