

Design, construction expo focuses on communication

A two-day conference focusing on innovations in the design industry has been scheduled Oct. 29-30 at the Hyatt Regency Dearborn.

Design and Construction Expo 92 was organized by the American Institute of Architects Michigan, American Society of Interior Designers Michigan, the Construction Specifications Institute Detroit and the Society for Marketing Professional Services Michigan.

Theme of the conference, the first in which the professional associations have joined, is What a Great Idea.

"What we're trying to do is improve communications between all people involved in construction... trying to make the process easier and better," said Larry Raymond, president of CSI Detroit.

Combined membership of the sponsoring organizations exceeds 3,300.

"Basically, it's one-stop shopping," said Rae Dumke, executive

director of AIA Michigan. "The purpose is to involve all facets of the construction industry."

"What's interesting is next year in February, all the groups you see here will combine with CAM (Construction Association of Michigan)," she added. "We'll again be doing continuing ed programs."

A wide spectrum of interests will be covered through a series of programs in five separate tracks — design, marketing, practice, technology and specifying (written description of work plans).

Each track offers up to nine workshops. Participants can pick and choose workshops among different tracks.

Some of the offerings include the creative executive workshop; finding work — identifying, qualifying and tracking leads; financial

management of design firms; computer aided facility management; and building sound construction documents.

Other seminars touch on liability, lighting trends and getting paid.

Charles "Chic" Thompson, president of Creative Management Group in Charlottesville, Va., will deliver the keynote address on the power of ideas.

"From what I understand and what I've read, he has a lot of ways to motivate people," Dumke said.

A catalog outlining workshops may be obtained by phoning AIA Detroit at 965-4100. The price is \$40 per workshop for reservations made through Friday, \$50 per workshop after that day.

TLC can restore wood's finish

Ordinary use, abuse and the ravages of time can damage a furniture finish, but most of this damage is easily repaired. All that's required is some time and a minimum of materials and expense.

In most cases, it's better to preserve and repair a finish than it is to replace it (strip it off and refinish it).

The first step is to identify the finish used on the furniture being repaired. Ideally, you'll overcoat the repaired area with the same finish. Shellac, lacquer and varnish are common finishes. To identify them, apply a solvent to an inconspicuous area.

Start by applying denatured

alcohol. Alcohol will readily dissolve shellac, and it will slowly soften lacquer. Lacquer thinner will readily dissolve lacquer, and will soften shellac. It will cause varnish to swell, crinkle and lift.

Next, clean the surface using a soft cloth dampened with mineral spirits (also known as paint thinner) or commercial furniture cleaner. This removes built-up dirt and wax and gives you a clearer idea of what the finish actually looks like. After cleaning, you may discover the damage is really just a light scuff. If so, you may be able to hide the scuff by applying paste wax or polish.

You can also hide a minor

scratch by rubbing over it with a furniture wax pencil or by applying some liquid touchup solution. Both are available in a variety of wood colors. Touchup solution stains and overcoats in one step.

Crazing and alligatoring describes a pattern of fine, irregular cracks in the finish, usually caused by excessive heat or long exposure to sunlight.

Alligatoring shellac or lacquer usually responds nicely to amalgamation (applying a solvent to partially dissolve the finish). Stroke on the solvent with a fine artist's brush until the finish softens and fills the cracks. Let the finish reharden overnight, then buff with wax.

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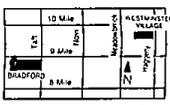


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