

EXPO 2017: A Great Success!



The 2017 edition of the Forest Products Machinery & Equipment Exposition – Expo 2017 – was a spectacular showcase for the wood products industry in Atlanta. Sponsored and conducted by the Southern Forest Products Association (SFPA) every two years since 1950, this event has traditionally included many of the biggest names in the business displaying everything from sawmill machinery to materials handling equipment, attracting key representatives from the nation's largest wood products manufacturers.

For three days, 186 exhibitors displayed the latest equipment, technology and services available. Featuring a floor plan that was larger than the 2015 event with nearly 2,000 exhibitors and visitors in attendance, Expo 2017 covered more than 55,000 square feet in two halls of the Georgia World Congress Center. And the growth of the show was evidenced by the list of 35 first-time exhibitors. [Click here](#) to see a collection of photos from the show.

"Once again, quality attendance wins," remarked exposition director Eric Gee. "Exhibitors were pleased seeing decision-makers who were ready to upgrade their hardwood and softwood sawmill operations," he added.

Exhibitors were impressed with the quality crowd, commenting: "The right people came here with purchasing power." "Face-to-face time here with mill owners is invaluable to the growth of our business." "We enjoyed focused visits with decision-makers."

For the first time, Expo held a Q&A chat on the Expo Twitter page ([@forestprodexpo](#)) during the show. It was an opportunity to create a conversation between Expo and the wonderful exhibitors. The twitter chat gave exhibitors the opportunity to promote their companies and products.

The Twitter chat also gave Expo staff an opportunity to hear what exhibitors think of the show. Webster Industries tweeted "The Expo has increased our brand awareness by introducing our products and services to potential customers, as well as establishing new relationships." The best part of the Expo Q&A is that the entire conversation is saved on Twitter and can be read again by searching #FPEXPO17Chat at the top of your Twitter page. Timber Processing Magazine's editor, Dan Shell, was able to capture the exhibitors' thoughts on Expo 2017 and the Forest Products Industry. [Click here](#) to view the video interview of Expo's exhibitors.

Once again, the INNOTECH program brought the educational element to the show, providing two full days of more than 20 presentations covering advances in sawmill technologies, project planning, mill upgrades and market research.



Next steps include a meeting of SFPA's Expo Advisory Committee to assess the show's success and begin the planning phase for Expo 2019.

For questions or comments about the show, please e-mail Eric at egee@sfpa.org.
