

CAST POLYMER

SUMMER 2023

# CONNECTION

**Synmar & Castech:  
Growth by diversifying  
and customizing**

**ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:**

- Today's marketing world
- Answers to digital marketing questions
- The fun and connections of The Buzz
- Down memory lane

**A PREVIEW OF  
POLYCON**



- 4 Profile: Synmar & Castech
- 9 The digital marketing world
- 16 The Buzz
- 18 ICPA's 50 years

## 14 What to expect in Atlanta

### DEPARTMENTS

- 2 President's letter
- 23 ICPA news to know
- 26 Index of advertisers

#### ON THE COVER:

Synmar & Castech started in a traditional manner: an entrepreneur founded the business in his garage. Today, it's one of the Atlanta area's outstanding shops and one of the hosts for POLYCON Atlanta 2023. Read the story on page 4. On the cover is a custom marble shower with an L-shaped kneewall, shelving and a curved front marble whirlpool tub with a curved tub step.

All company photos are copyright: Synmar & Castech

PRODUCED BY  
GSP Publishing  
Genilee Swope Parente,  
Executive Editor  
gsparente@verizon.net

DESIGNED BY  
Inspired 2 Design  
www.inspired2design.com

PUBLISHED BY  
**THE ICPA**  
INTERNATIONAL CAST POLYMER ASSOCIATION

12195 Highway 92  
Ste. 114 #176  
Woodstock, GA 30188  
Phone: 470-219-8139  
www.TheICPA.com

For advertising rates,  
please contact  
Jennifer Towner at  
Jennifer@theicpa.com or  
470-219-8139

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

# All a-Buzz



**Those of us that attended The Buzz in Chicago in April came home excited about our profession, industry and association.** This was a fantastic event thanks to clever and creative planning by the committee members that organized the social activities and educational sessions (see the story and photo spread on pages 16 and 17). As with the first Buzz in 2022, the 2023 meeting created a relaxed way to network with each other, share best practices, stay up-

to-date on industry happenings and have fun while we made new connections and affirmed old friendships. This year's event also had an expanded agenda of roundtable discussions on issues critical to today's operations.

Because the feedback from those roundtables was overwhelmingly positive, we've expanded some topics at POLYCON Atlanta 2023 September 18-20 (see page 14). I hope to see all of you at that meeting, and I encourage you to share with me your feedback on how we're doing as an association.

Speaking of how we're doing: we need members willing to give a bit of time to serve as committee members. This is not a huge commitment of time or resources, and I can tell you from personal experience and tales from other members, serving on a committee is a really fulfilling way to get involved. The organization as a whole benefits when everyone is engaged and participating. If this is a season where you can't serve on a committee now, but can see yourself doing so in the future, let us know that, too. We can only have committees if we have people to staff them.

Besides those that support special events, ICPA committees include: The Communication Committee (social media, magazine, newsletter, podcast); the Education/Technical Committee (event sessions, training, standards); the Membership Committee (member retention and growth, membership materials, new member support); and the SAFE PLANT Committee (strategy and resource development, CCT program safety module, member

participation). Contact Jennifer Towner if you're interested in any of those areas.

I've been hearing about the success of our Live Grout Free website (livegroutfree.com) from participating manufacturers. This site

“OUR EFFORTS TO BEEF UP SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION OF THE SITE ARE WORKING; TRAFFIC HAS GREATLY INCREASED”

was created to promote cultured marble and solid surface products and the benefits of living without grout. Our efforts to beef up social media promotion of the site are working; traffic has greatly increased, and ICPA members have been telling me they are receiving calls from new customers who

found them by going to that website and clicking on the membership map.

This issue of the magazine focuses on marketing. The firm we've hired to help the association with promoting Live Grout Free has answered important questions all of us are wondering about in today's digital world. The article explains why it's so important to pay attention to rankings on search engine tools and how to get those rankings.

Also in this issue are some excellent remarks about ICPA's history by Larry Kraft, who was the first person to be president when the organization became ICPA (in 1993) instead of its predecessor. Kraft's remarks help us celebrate our 50 years of being a national association. Don't miss the puzzle on page 21 that will test your knowledge of our industry and organization.

Looking forward to further celebrations of our 50th anniversary and other exciting events including POLYCON this fall.

**Kerry Klodt**  
ICPA President  
General Manager, Tower Industries



**ACS**  
INTERNATIONAL  
a **dorfner** company

**ONYX PRO 50™**

high translucency alumina tri-hydrate

*Dura Stone*

premium solid surface fillers

*Artistone*

castable engineered granite

**MARBLE-PRO**

low resin demand marble filler

*Featherlite*

weight reducing filler blends

*Poly Stone™*

sprayable granite and solid surface material

photo credit: The Bradley Corporation

**CUSTOMIZE. YOUR.**  
**COLOR.**

For pricing & samples visit [acstone.com](http://acstone.com) or Email: [ACS.Sales@dorfner.com](mailto:ACS.Sales@dorfner.com) 1.800.669.9214



# Synmar & Castech

## Keeping customers coming back

BY GENILEE SWOPE  
PARENTE

Synmar & Castech, Jonesboro, GA was founded in the same way

many of the long-established companies in cast polymer started: a young, ambitious entrepreneur with exposure to the industry struck out on his own in 1978 and began making a few cultured marble products in his basement.

That man—Jeffrey White—spent a lifetime seeing his company grow and expand, but if any event affirms he'd been operating the right way from the beginning, it's what happened after he passed away in 2012. Long-time Georgia business broker Ray Boreham was hired to sell the company; however, he was so impressed, he bought it instead.



Company President Kimberly Peek

“Mr. Boreham was intrigued by Synmar & Castech’s story—its history, its employees, its operations, its successes and its ability for future growth, so he decided to purchase the company instead of brokering a

deal. He became owner in October 2012,” explains Kimberly Peek, company president and chief operating officer.

Peek already had a long history with the company by then. She was hired in 2001 and worked closely over the next 10 years with White before she was designated to manage all operations for White (in 2011), then designated as general manager in 2012 for Boreham. She’s been the president of Synmar & Castech since 2022.

### The early days

White was just 26 years old in October 1978 when he founded Synmar. He had worked with other marble manufacturers but was ready to strike out on his own so he bought a 12-foot vanity mold as well as a splash mold and started making vanity tops in his home in south Atlanta—the sole employee of the company.

By 1984, he was ready for his first expansion so he moved his operations to an old gas station in College Park.

“By then, he had four employees and had increased his production line to include tub and shower options,” Peek explains.

The very next year business volume and production volume were so great, he purchased 2.7 acres in Jonesboro and began construction on a new 10,000-square-foot manufacturing facility.

“Over the years, Synmar’s facility has been expanded to more than twice that original size to accommodate larger manufacturing areas as well as a large showroom, additional office space and storage,” Peek explains.

Meanwhile, the product line expanded to include a variety of cast marble tubs, tub decks, table tops, shower pans and shower surrounds with accessories.

In 1995, White made another major move: he founded



Synmar & Castech is called to do many customization projects. This cast marble project is a custom-shaped corner tub overlay.



To see the products up close, customers come to the showroom, which has been expanded several times and is constantly updated.

“Customers usually prefer a business that can provide as many products and services as possible for their projects,” Peek explains. “We seek to provide ways to make our customers’ projects simpler and easier while also providing excellent service and unique, quality products,” Peek says.

The customer base for the company is wide: homebuilders, remodelers, designers, architects, Home Depot, Lowes, commercial contractors and the general public in Georgia and surrounding southeastern states.

the Castech leg of the business to begin manufacturing solid surface products.

“A new building was constructed next to the Synmar facility to accommodate production of solid surface operations,” Peek says.

Castech has since expanded that operation to include the fabrication of granite, quartz and natural marble.

“We started fabricating these additional products as they became popular both because they were in demand and to diversify our portfolio,” Peek explains.

The new areas of operation, like the cultured marble operations, help the company meet its goal, a goal built into its tagline: “You Imagine... We Create.”

## Current business

The tagline reflects Synmar & Castech’s long history of making products for customized projects. The company offers both custom and standard sizes, but prides itself on being sufficiently diversified to be able to offer what’s needed for each project.

Synmar & Castech provides everything from single products to total room jobs.

“We do a lot of custom design—which often includes layouts and custom colors. We start by asking questions about what clients want, then incorporating their desires into design and color options,” Peek explains.

When given the opportunity, the company provides full layout plans for an entire room free of charge.

Peek says that approach and a focus on quality and economical design are the reasons for Synmar & Castech’s success.

“We are the experts on our products so it’s up to us to show them how we can implement their desires and needs into what we make.”

The approach works because customers prefer to get as much as they can from one trusted source, she says. “Any construction job is stressful for clients and they do not want to get their products from a vast number of businesses,” she explains.

The range of products today includes bathtubs, vanity



The company’s manufacturing plant has expanded two-fold since it moved to the Jonesboro site.



A Synmar & Castech employee pours a cast marble shower pan.

tops, showers, accessories and more for both the bathroom and kitchen. One of the main trends over the years has been the ability to provide a wider array of colors and finishes.

Peek says she doesn't attribute the current industry trend of more options desired by people to the widely-reported-COVID-19 issue of wanting to break out of the bonds that being stuck in the home created for people.

She says that a wider range has been developing for a long time.

"Over the years, colors have changed from one array to the next from golds, greens and burgundies to beiges and browns to white and grays. There has always been a continuous change in color trends and patterns," she says.

In the last 15 years, however, the company has greatly expanded color offerings and options, especially in the cast marble line.

"We can create anything a homeowner might want with very few restraints," she says. Synmar calls what's happening with cultured marble, "nature's beauty with science's advantage."

"This references the fact we mix natural beauty of stone (marble) with science (chemicals/resins/color) to create custom shades, shapes and sizes," she says. While natural stone is limited by what's already there, "cast marble gives the advantage of mixing crushed marble with other ingredients to enable the manipulation of color, pattern, size and shape for each piece made, allowing a vast variety of custom combinations."

The company is not afraid to try new lines of materials and discard them when they don't work—most recently metal veneering, poly paneling and natural stone shower walls, which were all discarded due to poor quality and supplier problems. While Synmar and Castech has an enthusiastic ambition to release new product lines, it now takes a cautious approach to launching them, Peek says.

"Our newest product lines have not been released or marketed yet because of past issues with the suppliers and manufacturers of previously released product lines. We want to secure trust and reliability for the products and services we provide to our customers," Peek explains.

## Marketing and meeting challenges

Synmar & Castech gets the word out on its products and services to many customers via its website and extensive showroom. Peek says the main source of new customers is referrals from happy customers.

"We actually don't do a lot of marketing. We have

always depended on word-of-mouth, repeat customers and our reputation," Peek says.

Good reviews and reliance on internet searches are also important, while the showroom provides a good avenue for customers that want to see products up close, she says.

"We also focus resources on our website and are about to do a major revamp to bring it up to date and introduce new product lines," Peek adds.

The company does not expend many resources on social media advertising because "we have found that paid advertisements do not provide as much traffic as reputation and referrals," Peek says. "We focus on service and quality. Every satisfied customer can result in five more customers walking through those doors."

Like the rest of the cast polymer industry, Synmar & Cas-



This Synmar & Castech shower has a custom-shaped bench, shelving and a window surround.



tech's main challenges today are price increases and labor shortages.

The company has a three-pronged approach to prices. "We have passed on some of the increases through changes in pricing structures to customers. We've cut costs in areas where it's possible. And we've absorbed what we need to in some cases. It's been a difficult struggle so we hope suppliers can come back with some decreases going forward," Peek says.

As far as labor, "We continue to use every avenue possible to bring in new hires" including increased hourly starting pay, Peek says. The company also is working on new employee incentive programs that will begin this year, she adds.

She says the industry provided her with great opportunities and can do the same for any employee willing to give

**"In the last 15 years, the company has majorly expanded color offerings and options, especially in the cast marble line."**

it a chance.

"The cast marble industry is a unique industry, and it takes years of hands-on experience to learn the technical sides of custom-manufactured cast marble products in-depth," she explains.

However, experts with substantial experience and knowledge in the production or installation of cast marble products are essential to any individual company in the industry no matter where they are and what they offer.

Because of this, "anyone who has the devotion and passion to specialize in the cast marble trade has advancement opportunities and will experience the personal satisfaction of being a fundamental member of this long-time, ever-evolving industry," she says.

That's one reason the company has so many long-time employees.

"Most of our employees have been with us a long time: from 7 to 38 years. More than 40% of our staff were mentored by White himself," Peek says.

"We owe much of our success to these valuable, long-term employees who have integrated their unique skills and knowledge into the custom products we provide," she adds.

### **See you in September**

Peek is working with ICPA Executive Director Jennifer Towner, the PolyTECH planners and sponsors on the upcoming POLYCON meeting and says she's looking forward to serving as one of the event's host companies.

"We are excited to share our facility," she says and to play a role in the association's continued success.

"We have been an ICPA member since 2017 and feel it's been as beneficial to us as it is to everyone in the industry. We all learn much from each other, and it's great to be able to reach out to other companies for information on new techniques and other help we might need—especially given the many changes over recent years," she says. ■

Genilee Swope Parente is executive editor of **Cast Polymer Connection**. She welcomes ideas on companies to profile and can be reached at [gsparente@verizon.net](mailto:gsparente@verizon.net).



A custom vanity top features rock edging and a custom matching mirror with the same edging.



enhanced  
by Omya

# Omyasphere® 300 Series

The Omyasphere® 300 Series is the latest in advanced lightweight minerals for cast polymers

Omyasphere 300 Series reduces the weight of cast polymer products by up to 40% and reduces formulation costs while at the same time maintaining impact strength, dimensional stability, and has no effect on gel time.

[info.polymers@omya.com](mailto:info.polymers@omya.com)



THINKING OF TOMORROW





# Making the best use of the digital world

BY GENILEE SWOPE  
PARENTE

**When talking about marketing, leaders of yesterday focused strategy on general advertising, direct**

**mail and public relations.** The leaders of today spend as much, if not more time talking about digital channels. The old ways of getting companies' names and brands out there still exist and are important to many types of industries. But newer tools hold promise of reaching new and better-defined audiences, which could be useful to the manufacturing industry.

That reality also brings much frustration and head-scratching, however. Older business leaders as well as younger, crazy-busy ones, are asking themselves: with the pace of what's happening, how can I hope to understand this world enough to make the best use of our resources?

The answer, like so many in the business world, is multi-faceted. What's clear, however, is that ignoring the digital world could be fatal.

ICPA recently recognized this reality and hired a firm to beef up efforts to get the Live Grout Free website out to its

public. Currently, the association and the firm are taking advantage of Google and Facebook advertising to increase awareness and get people to the site.

According to early figures, the efforts are already successful.

Rick Steranko of SpredX, the firm hired for the effort, made a report to the ICPA board in April of this year. The reports shows that the Google ad program begun on February 20 already had well over 11,000 impressions and more than 1,300 clicks. More than 100 visitors had gone further and clicked out to the map that shows specific manufacturers or to featured companies. Facebook ads, which are much newer (April), had received 5,752 impressions with 237 clicks.

"Clearly the program is already working. Not only are we educating people, we are driving them to member sites and businesses," Steranko told the board.

His firm, SpredX Media ([www.spredx.com](http://www.spredx.com)) offers website design and digital marketing plans. **Cast Polymer Connection** recently talked to Steranko about the issues he and his clients face every day.

## How do I choose?

With so many platforms out there today, from Facebook (the first to become widely known) to the channels heavily used by younger viewers (Snapchat and TikTok, etc.), it's hard to know where to be and how to get there. As with most business strategies, a key is to look to experience and expertise; however, because the social media world is so expansive and moving at lightning speed, finding that expertise is a challenge.

However, Steranko says it's vital.

"Too many companies try to do too much, which means it is taking too much of their time. They never get good at it and then they give up. You need a sustainable, focused strategy not only for results but to make the best use of time and energy so you can maintain your momentum," he says.

Creating a sustainable plan will not happen overnight, he points out. "But if you can focus on strategy, the results will come," he says.

Steranko and SpredX have used various platforms for manufacturing and small business clients for different reasons.

"Depending on the goals of the client, I could use any of the following: Google, Facebook Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok," Steranko says. "My current favorite platform is Google Adwords," he adds.

He favors it because it's seasoned.

"This channel is mature so it is not cheap. But in my opinion, it's competitive, which means if you can create an advantage, you'll do well," he says. Creating that advantage comes by using better ads, designing a better website and learning how to get quality scoring on Google as well as better conversion rates.

He considers the older platforms of Facebook and Instagram "billboard ads" today, but cautions they still need attention.

"With the loss of some tracking caused by iPhone operating system (iOS) updates, those two platforms have changed somewhat. Yet you get very cheap impressions and many clicks by using them right. That means they are the best place to run branding content and a great place to recruit new employees," he says.

## The place to start? Your website

While businesses and their leaders have terms rolling around in their brains such as "search engine optimization" (SEO), company and product "rankings," "artificial intelligence" (AI), "plug-ins," "linking/backlinking," and "keywords," they need to realize that all of what's happening is connected back to the company website.

It doesn't matter how fancy the website looks if it doesn't operate in a way that invites attention and teaches people and search engines how to find the company.

"When you build a website, you're building it for two reasons: first, to attract users/visitors and second, to grab the attention of search engines," says Steranko. In other words, a site built for users only might be gorgeous and sexy, but if search engines cannot pull the correct information from the site, it will not rank. Not having the right data won't stop the search engine from "crawling" (pulling data) from the site, but if good data doesn't come up in the searching, it will hurt the site rankings.

Instead, site appeal and functionality need to have a balance to get maximum results.



Steranko warns that: "Remember, the 'product' for companies such as Google and other search engines is information: search results. It's up to us [the business world] to make it easy; to provide as much information on our companies as we can."

He advises starting with website development software and services designed to allow maximum information to flow and to continue to flow.

When he's building a site from scratch today, he starts with WordPress and Shopify "because they are the biggest."

"Events occur quickly in the online world so you don't want to build on software that can't keep up and may hurt you over time," he says.

For example, he likes WordPress because as long as it manages to stay a leader, the site will synchronize with other top software so when an update occurs with that software, "it will be automatic with WordPress," he points out.

Meanwhile, he warns that some cheaper website-building software programs today have ceilings—limits on features and abilities for the site.

"These options might seem cheap and easy to get up and running, but if you continue to grow or you want to get into

more sophisticated ways to market, you can get into trouble,” he says.

## Building the site

The home page is the first place that website and branding impressions are made and a key traffic light in what happens site-wise. You start with that page, he says, then build outward.

“That page has the most authority with search engines since it’s hit the most,” Steranko points out. “This means any page you link to and from your home page will likely get some ‘link juice’ (domain authority) and boost your rankings,” he says.

The second most important page today, however, is the “About Us” page.

“In 90 percent of the sites I manage, that page is the next place people usually go,” he says. Yet most companies put only a management team image and a small paragraph on that page.

“With user attention spans so narrow nowadays, that’s a terrible waste,” he says.

A better way is to create “About Us” as a second home page in a manner that highlights all critical products and services and has a specific call to action.

“When people go to this second page, they are looking for more information so you definitely want to give them that, but then take advantage of the views that result,” he says.

As with all of the website pages, that means keeping their attention as long as possible and leading them to other pages and resources.

Using keywords on the site used to be one of the most talked about tools. While it’s still an important consideration, Steranko explains that the search engines have become much more sophisticated so “stuffing” a site with keywords does no good and may well hurt a company’s ranking.

“The Google algorithm is getting closer and closer to the real world,” Steranko says. “That means there is less importance on hacking practices such as keyword stuffing.”

Instead, companies need to focus resources and efforts on getting search engines all the information they can on the business and its products by building an informative website, using tools such as Google Search Console and Google Business Profile and ensuring they are represented on as many online registries as possible.



“If Google and other parties know you’re a legit business, that you’re X years old, that you’re located in a particular area, what your products are and who your customers are, you’ll show up in search results,” Steranko says.

Too many companies make the mistake of focusing on keywords first and user experience/business overviews second, he points out.

“The better way is to focus on the best descriptions of your business and services first, then build your site for user experience and then perfect your site for keywords,” he adds.

For example, SpredX’s business includes several web development and digital marketing services.

“I made sure to build my site by clearly describing these services and then ensuring the site gives users a great experience. My keyword search then revealed that ‘web design’ and ‘SEO’ keywords get the best conversion rate so my advertising is now geared toward those words and the content I produce includes those terms. However, they did not dictate how I built my site or described my business,” he says.

Focusing on keywords from the start can hurt more than help, he adds.

Steranko also pushes companies to use plug-ins, pieces of software that are already built by another developer that can be “plugged in” as a benefit to users on the company site.

For WordPress users, Steranko recommends the plug-in Yoast SEO, “which gives you a structure of how to add all your SEO optimization to your site and pages.” The software suggests good meta titles and descriptions, images and shows how the page will be listed in the search results.

At the same time, Steranko warns that companies need to ensure that the plug-ins they use are properly built and maintained to ensure the website’s overall performance and keep it secure.

## “Link juice” and other tools

In a recent podcast on Cast Polymer Radio ([www.castpolymer.com](http://www.castpolymer.com)), host Jonathan Taylor and Steranko talked a lot about the importance of linking—both outbound and inbound.

Outbound links are links on the website that go to other locations to provide resources on issues users find important.

“These are used mainly to add trust in your company as an authority and to show a depth of knowledge,” Steranko says. “Currently, there’s a debate about whether they help or hurt page rankings. My opinion is that businesses should use them if they add value to the user because, in the end, Google’s customers are searchers. If you continue to provide searchers better results, Google will reward you,” he says.



In other words, if you have a very good source or more detailed content than you can provide on your site, “You should link to it, but don’t add external links for the purpose of ranking or it may have the inverse effect,” he says.

Inbound links, links back to your website from another location in your website, provide excellent “link juice” as well. “This shows you are a legitimate business and not a scam and that other companies trust you since their rankings would be hurt by linking to a scam,” he says.

Because of the many “black hat” tactics that exist on the internet today, “Google has added a lot of security around link building,” he says. Getting other parties to link to your page can take a lot of time and effort, he adds, “but you can think of it as your public relations efforts,” he adds.

Also vital but used less often is internal linking on a website—links from one page to another.

“Most people understand the importance of external links, but not internal. But linking from the home page to other best pages shows Google what you think is important,” he says.

It also expands the time a person will spend on your site.

“Time on site is one of the most important factors in the Google algorithm,” Steranko says. “This makes sense because

it is one of the best ways that Google knows if it has delivered a good search result. If you click on a site and it’s not what you wanted, you are not going to spend very long on the site.”

That also explains why videos play an important role.

“With attention spans dropping, almost no one reads long sections of text, but most will watch a few minutes of a video,” he explains. That means more time on the site.

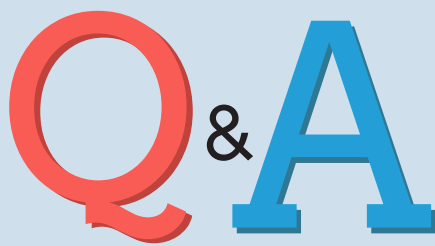
As far as new tools, he agrees that artificial intelligence will some day play a role in creating updates to websites quickly.

“AI is definitely already here, and I am using it for content writing and ad creation. It saves me time on certain tasks. But to use it for more advanced purposes is tougher. Currently, it’s a one-to-one ratio for me—I spend as much time prompting it to create correctly as I save,” he says.

However, “the future is clear. It can produce endless amounts of content and perform time-consuming tasks. I’m looking forward soon to being able to use it as a personal assistant. In the long-term, it will be much more than that,” he says. ■

---

Genilee Swope Parente is executive editor of **Cast Polymer Connection**. She can be reached at [gsparente@verizon.net](mailto:gsparente@verizon.net). Rick Steranko can be reached at [rick@spreadx.com](mailto:rick@spreadx.com).



## Digital Marketing FAQs

*Excerpted from the blog of Oneupweb, a digital marketing firm*

When you’ve worked in marketing for a couple of decades, you’ve surfed countless waves of change. Through it all, here are the top digital marketing FAQs we hear at Oneupweb:

### Q. How do you reach the right audience?

**A.** Who you should be marketing to online depends on the customers’ profile, aka buyer persona, that you create based on market research, search data and website performance data.

It also depends on the digital marketing channels and budget—because sometimes casting a wide net is too expensive or overwhelming. Your buyer persona should answer why and how your audience decides to do business with you, what’s important to them, and what’s stopped them from working with you in the past. Your primary persona is not the person you want to buy from you in a perfect world; it’s someone who shows signs of being interested in your offering and qualified to purchase.

### Q. How do you create a digital marketing strategy?

**A.** This is one of those burning marketing questions.

To refine or create a digital marketing strategy, start by clearly writing down what your business goals are and agreeing on them internally. We love the **SMART** goal format:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Relevant
- Timely

If you need some structure, we have created a SMART goals template (<https://go.oneupweb.com/smart-goals-template>) that can help. After you have your structure, go through existing and past digital marketing efforts, and look at the data to see how strategies performed in each channel. Keep what works and replace what doesn't. This is an oversimplification, but it takes a lot more than one digital marketing FAQ column to answer the question in a way that meets your business's needs.

### **Q. Which social media platforms should I use?**

**A.** Don't fall victim to the myth that your business should be on every social media platform.

If your target customer isn't on a particular social media platform, then you may not need to be either. Each social media platform releases its demographic information, making it easier to see which platforms your audience likes best. In general, TikTok and Instagram are more likely to reach Gen-Z and Millennials. Facebook is good if you're looking to reach stay-at-home moms and people between 28 and 55. If you're looking to address a more professional audience, LinkedIn is where you want to focus your efforts. If you don't have the internal resources to manage a lot of social media activity, it's better to use one or two platforms well than it is to use four poorly. Social media marketing is also not meant to be a place to promote your products and services. You want to focus on building trust and becoming a valuable resource. This way, when your potential customer is ready to purchase whatever product or service you sell, you'll be top of mind.

### **Q. What is a content marketing strategy?**

**A.** Because content marketing is a long-term, long-lasting marketing strategy that requires solid SEO simultaneously, some teams may not see the value in it or know how to measure the value.

A content marketing strategy involves identifying your audience, developing audio, video, photo and blog content and delivering it at the right time to the right people on the right channels. It's not easy and it may be difficult to track without professional analytics tools and training. That's why this is one of the most asked marketing questions.

But the truth is, great content marketing supports all your other digital marketing strategies. For example, when you align your content and SEO strategy with pay-per-click strategies, you can unlock major benefits in both organic and paid media channels.

### **Q. What KPIs should I be tracking?**

**A.** Your business goals and the source/medium you're choosing to convey your message will determine what key performance indicators (KPIs) measure digital marketing success.

For example, if your goal is to increase the number of visitors that convert to leads on your blog, then you would want to track blog sessions and resulting lead forms and/or clicks-to-call. The KPI you care about may vary based on what angle you're coming from—what role you play in the company (sales, marketing, profit generation?) and what you're reporting on.

### **Q. What does “conversion” mean in digital marketing?**

**A.** Speaking of KPIs, does it seem like everyone defines “conversion” differently?

Some companies (or single departments within companies) may differentiate between a website conversion—such as a contact form completion—and a sales conversion, which is a successful sale that occurs after a website conversion. In our agency's experience, companies commonly call sales-oriented website actions conversions, and they call sales, sales. However, if you want to talk about it, make sure your internal team and vendors are on the same page.

### **Q. Do I need a digital marketing agency?**

**A.** If you're looking for growth, the answer is: of course.

Digital marketing agencies help you focus on your business instead of spending resources on SEO or video production. Our advice as one of those agencies: look to experience and the right expertise.

You can reach Oneupweb at [www.oneupweb.com](http://www.oneupweb.com).

# Atlanta:

## A good location for a birthday party

**The site of the 2023 annual conference for ICPA is Atlanta, and no city is more appropriate for celebrating the association's 50th anniversary.**

The city symbol is a phoenix, the mythical bird that rises from the ashes of its predecessors. The symbol was chosen because Atlanta is the only city in North America to have been destroyed as an act of war (burned almost to the ground during the Civil War). It's been rebuilding and expanding ever since.

ICPA's predecessor associations did not burn to the ground, but both the industry and its organizations went through a period of darkness during the housing crisis of the mid-2000s that sliced through the industry like sharp talons. However, from those ashes, the industry has rebuilt itself stronger than ever, and the association has pulled away to once again be an independent organization.

The city is also appropriate because the very first meeting to take back the POLYCON title was held in Atlanta (2015) just before the association became independent.

### The specifics for 2023

POLYCON Atlanta 2023 is September 18 to 20. The general sessions, breakout programs and the exhibit hall are in the Hilton Atlanta/Marietta Hotel & Conference Center, 500 Powder Springs Street, Marietta. The conference center is just 20 minutes from downtown Atlanta, 15 minutes from the famous Buckhead area of Atlanta and 30 minutes from Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport. It's also a mile from the historic Marietta Square and is home to the City Club Marietta Golf Course as well as the Gone with the Wind Museum at Brumby Hall.

PolyTECH training and special sessions will be held at two area member companies' facilities: Synmar & Castech, Jonesboro, GA and AGCO Inc., Norcross, GA.

Synmar & Castech will host sessions and a tour on Monday, September 18. The manufacturer is located at 8750 Roberts Road, which is 10 miles south of the airport.

AGCO will be the site for special sessions and demonstrations on Wednesday, September 20. The AGCO facility is

at 2782 Simpson Circle, Norcross, which is 45 minutes to an hour (depending on traffic) from the airport and about 40 minutes from the conference center.

ICPA supplier member Huber Engineered Materials, which is headquartered in Atlanta, will open its facilities for manufacturer members to visit while at POLYCON. One special event will be a tour of the large calcium carbonate mine in Marble Hill, Georgia on Wednesday. There will be no additional cost, and transportation will be provided. However, the tour will be very limited so those wanting to participate will need to register in advance. More detailed information and registration for the tour will be available in August.

### The schedule and topics

A specific schedule of events will be posted on ICPA's website ([www.theicpa.com](http://www.theicpa.com)) in June.

As in years past, Monday evening is devoted to registering and meeting up with old friends. Check-in is from 4 to 7 p.m. and a Welcome Cocktail Reception

hosted by Composites One as well as the grand opening of exhibits is from 5 to 7 p.m. that evening.

A general session on Tuesday will include updates on association programs as well as remarks by the Occupational Health and Safety Administration and an industry regulatory update on issues including styrene level testing and what will happen next with styrene.

Also on Tuesday are breakout sessions on topics geared to operational and administrative concerns for cast polymer plant operators and company owners. For example, planned sessions include human resources issues, insurance, artificial intelligence, search engine optimization and company product "rankings," software options for cast polymer companies, a congressional meet and greet and much more.

As far as the PolyTECH training program, specific sessions are being finalized but will include machine and equipment demonstrations, installation techniques, mold repair demonstrations and more.

Also in the final planning are many opportunities for networking including receptions and smaller meetings (a new member meet and greet), the gala on Tuesday evening, special tours of local facilities, and activities and opportuni-





ties to have fun while meeting new friends and reconnecting with those from the past.

The association will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its founding throughout the three-day event.

ICPA is grateful to four companies who are sponsors for POLYCON Atlanta. Thanks go to Composites One, The R.J. Marshall Company, Interplastic and ACS International.

### The hotel

The Hilton Atlanta/Marietta Hotel & Conference Center is sited on beautiful grounds. The facility has an on-site restaurant as well as a snack bar, an outdoor pool, a fitness center, an 18-hole golf course, a business center and more.

A reduced \$169 per night rate has been reserved for registrants until August 17 or until rooms run out. A link to accommodations can be found on the ICPA website via the POLYCON link. ■

## POLYCON Atlanta 2023 EVENT MAP



- A** - POLYTECH Training - MONDAY (SYNMAR)
- B** - HOTEL/Main Event Site - TUESDAY
- C** - POLYTECH Training - WEDNESDAY (AGCO)
- D** - MANUFACTURERS Field Trip - Wednesday (HUBER)
- E** - Hartsfield Jackson International Airport
- F** - Atlanta Landmarks

# Alliances made; knowledge gained at **THE BUZZ 2023**



A popular event this year was a contest inviting participants to learn how to make the very best margarita.

Several years ago, ICPA began to design a second national event for ICPA members—one that was more relaxed and informal than the fall POLYCON events but created to encourage networking.

The Buzz was born and the second annual event (April 28-29, Eaglewood Resort, Chicago) was even more popular than the first—61 people attended.

Planners came up with fun events that provided lots of time to network and make connections.

As one person's comments discussing a nighttime bowling event showed: "The event was extremely well thought out to encourage networking." Another person added that "the social events [at the Buzz] were the most valuable as they allowed interaction outside our normal work conversations."

At the same time, the educational aspect of the two-day event was expanded this year to include a few additional sessions, and meeting attendees took notice. Many meeting attendees commented that they found the most valuable experiences this year were these sessions, which were less informal than social events, but still designed in ways that encouraged relaxed conversation.

"Breakout events were extremely helpful in understanding industry-wide issues and struggles and how to compen-

sate for them," one person commented. Another added that "I enjoyed the laid-back approach to roundtable discussions to hear about struggles other manufacturers are feeling."

Many of the comments about what attendees would like to see in the future centered around topics for new sessions and roundtable discussions as well as an expansion of some of the topics discussed both at social and planned sessions.

For example, "I overheard two attendees talking about things they were doing for marketing and it was very interesting. [I'd like to see] a session in the future on marketing strategies."

Attendees also appreciated the fact that several events were planned to allow people to work together in smaller teams.

"Splitting up [the overall group] and getting to know other people on a more personal basis helps everyone be more relaxed and comfortable at future events," one commenter said.

One point everyone agreed upon was that The Buzz met its main goal of making new connections happen.

"The most valuable experience" listed by many attendees was "networking, sharing experiences and giving and receiving advice." One person called these connections "making alliances." ■



# THE BUZZ



The winners of the best margarita contest: (from left), Candy Smith, Lafayette Marble & Granite, LLC; Larry Blake, The R.J. Marshall Company; Kelly DeBusk, Composites Compliance; and Tom White, Interplastic.



ICPA board members met to discuss association business.



The name of the game at The Buzz is networking.



Sessions covered a number of current topics for the cast polymer industry.

## Thank you to sponsors and planners

Besides the many people who attended the event, two groups are responsible for the success of the 2023 The Buzz.

ICPA would like to express its appreciation to the sponsors that made the event possible. The R.J. Marshall Company hosted the welcome cocktail reception; and Composites One sponsored the bowling event. The association and board also send thanks to Interplastic Corporation and Advanced Plastics for serving as gold sponsors for the event.

ICPA and the board also want to recognize the planners of the event, who came up with some very fun and valuable new ways to make connections: Thanks to Laura Schmidt, Custom Marble; Melony Domingue of Lafayette Marble & Granite; and Scott MacKenzie, MacKenzie Vault. ■



The 50th anniversary of the association was highlighted through old publications, photos and materials.



# ICPA's 50-year birthday party: LET'S CELEBRATE



**In honor of the fact that ICPA and its predecessor associations were founded 50 years ago**, the association has been planning ways to celebrate and remember. One of the best ways to do so is to pan for gold among peoples' memories about how the industry and its organizations came to be. What better source for such golden nuggets is there than the first president of ICPA (when it became ICPA from its predecessor in 1993): Larry Kraft. Kraft is a long-time active member and the founder of Custom Marble, Inc. He is also the father of current ICPA board member Laura Schmidt.

Kraft's long history with cast polymer stretches back to 1978 when he started his business. Here's what he says:

## **What was the industry like when you entered it 45 years ago?**

When I started my business, cultured marble was in the process of gaining market acceptance. Many new shops were opening in response to a homebuilding business rebounding from high-interest rates that peaked at about 17%. Homes were becoming more affordable. In response, our industry was growing. Many of the shops back then were small with the owners in a key position such as sales or shop manager.

## **What have been the major changes you've seen in that industry?**

Our industry grew from the mid-1980s to 2000. In our area (the St. Louis market), there were about nine shops by 2000. (Currently, there are just three that are physically located in the same area). Most of the small shops were expanding; the product was getting better and better; consumer acceptance was high and we had a very positive atmosphere. Our industry was maturing—with much more focus on safety and environmental issues.

In the later 1990s, a change was occurring as many shops began diversifying into solid surface manufacturing and eventually getting into stone and other products. This wasn't necessarily a negative thing, it just diluted the focus from our traditional beginnings.

We all must recognize today that this is a mature industry. The days of heyday growth are past. Today's shops can be very successful with new designs and intelligent marketing efforts that reach our target audiences.

## **What was the association like in the early days and what major changes have you noted?**

For the first couple of years of starting my business, I wasn't even aware there were any organizations. A supplier made me aware and encouraged me to begin to attend regional meetings. In the early days, the meetings were often quarterly with a social event on Friday evening, a meeting and a shop tour on Saturday morning. We also had shop demonstrations by suppliers of raw materials,

**"As with the industry, the association has evolved into a mature organization with new challenges and solutions."**

and equipment was a common theme. We were all sharing ideas because at this point, we were trying to produce more quality and become more efficient.

In the early 1980s in our region, there was not much interest in the national association. By the mid-1980s, however, many of us had joined nationally and began attending our national annual meetings. These meetings were real eye-openers for most of us: they exposed us to the larger manufacturers, the national suppliers and many new ideas.

The meetings back then involved a lot of education about the manufacturing process. The CMI technical committee was very active in developing recommended processes and materials to improve our products. Much of the focus was on improving thermal shock resistance and resistance to yellowing.

The national meeting included an awards banquet that was always a gala event (one such meeting may have included the president riding in on a camel!). The marketplace (exhibits) was a huge display by suppliers, and leading supplier companies would introduce new products. For example, Gruber was usually introducing new mold designs and new equipment such as the mixers to produce solid surface materials. The biggest booths included Gruber, Reichhold, Georgia Marble and HK gel coats.

As we focused more on safety and environmental issues, the technical committees and standards of quality took on new critical roles. In the early 1990s, for example, the board of directors attempted to require that a manufacturer could not be a member unless it had a certified product, which included thermal shock minimal standards. We had  
*(continued on page 26)*



THE R.J.  
MARSHALL  
COMPANY

Rjmarshall.com

Customer Care: 888-514-8600

salesinfo@rjmarshall.com

Toll free: 800-338-7900

*14 new colors for 2023!*

**Cast Granite**

**Spray Granite**

**Densified  
Granite Effect**

(SE products for Solid Surface)



Sea Lion DGE 223



Silver Galaxy SFHD 2851



Avalanche SGE 221



Lustre SGE 256\*



Mountain Ice LXX 247 SE



Northern Camo SFHD 3125



Agate SGE 275\*



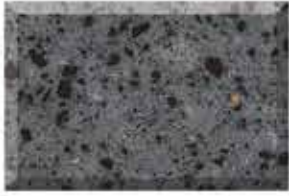
Magnetite SGE 313



Lunar Pearl LXX 284 SE



Southern Night SFHD 4510



Cosmic LXS 299\*

*Spray Granite  
Advantage*



Tundra SGA 229\*



Silver Dollar SGA 264\*

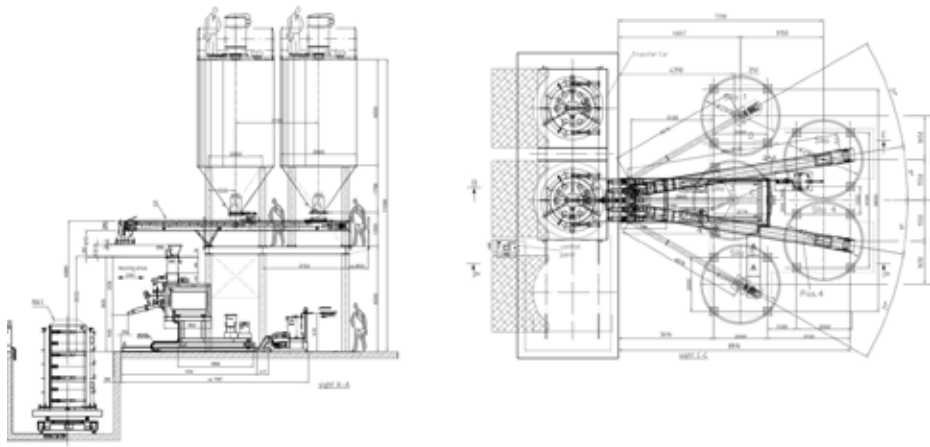


Olive DGE 314

*Sample material ready to ship.  
Contact us today!*

\* Features a reflective additive.

# ENHANCEMENT OF PROCESS ENDURANCE AND EFFICIENCY



---

FOR HIGHEST QUALITY  
CONTINUOUS NON-STOP  
PRODUCTION  
FULLY ERP INTEGRATED

---

---

SOLID SURFACE  
CULTURED MARBLE  
& OTHER MULTI-COMPONENT CONTINUOUS  
METERING & MIXING APPLICATIONS

---

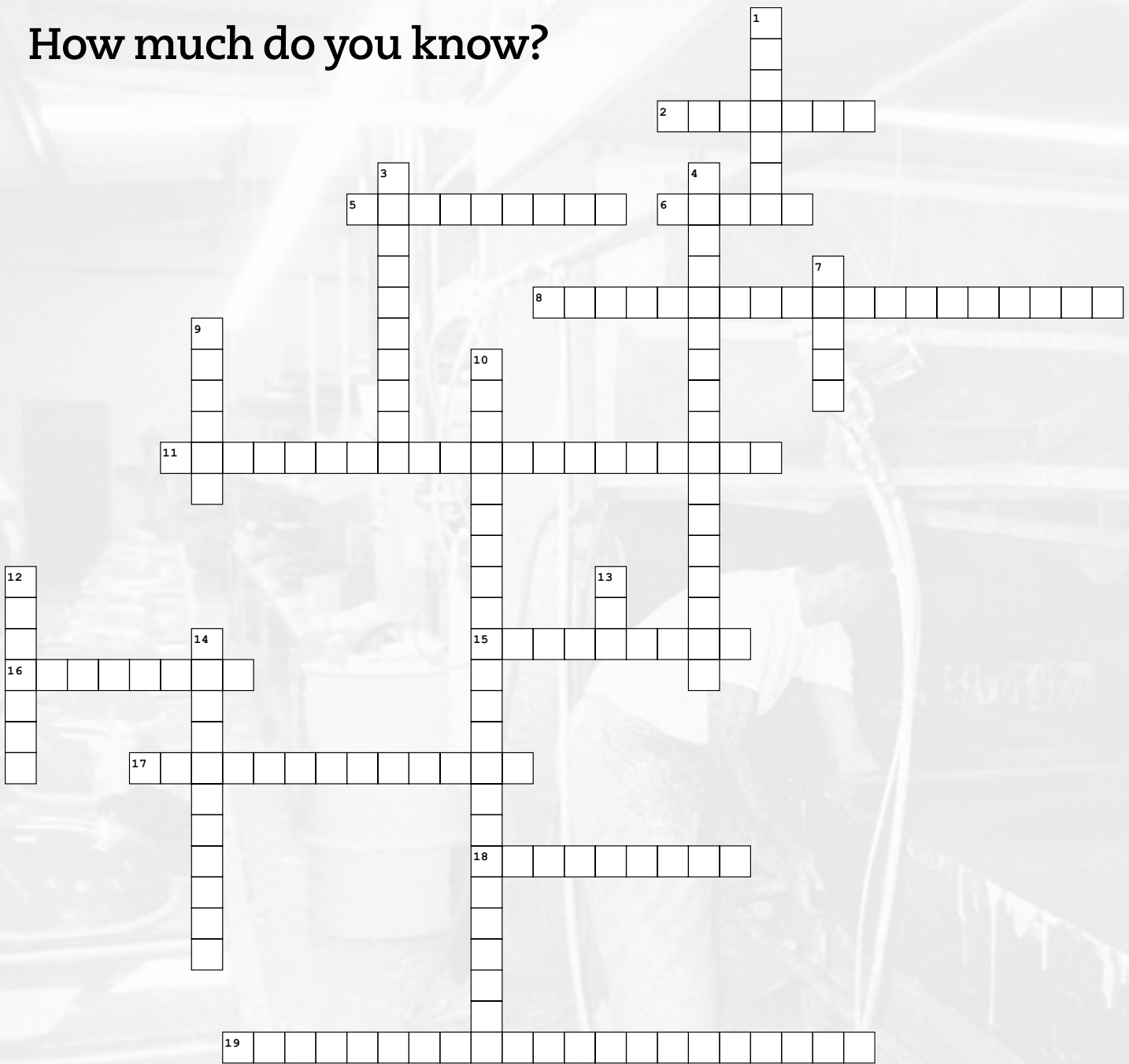


ENGINEERED & MANUFACTURED IN GERMANY  
SERVING GLOBALLY FOR MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY

RESPECTA MASCHINENBAU GMBH  
[WWW.RESPECTA.COM](http://WWW.RESPECTA.COM) / [JK@RESPECTA.COM](mailto:JK@RESPECTA.COM)



# How much do you know?



## Across

2. Where many of the very first cultured marble companies began
5. Name of the annual convention before it was POLYCON
6. State that industry icon Royce Newsom called home
8. What "ICPA" meant in 2002 (International \_\_\_\_)
11. What the last initials in CCT stand for (Certified \_\_\_\_\_)
15. City where the association moved in the 1990s when it hired a management firm
16. The name of the original technical manual
17. Name of the southern regional magazine for many years
18. Sector of the industry that pushed hard for an industry association in the 1970s
19. ACMA's predecessor organization (\_\_\_\_\_ Association) at the time ICPA management went under the bigger group's umbrella

## Down

1. City where the first POLYCON was held (2015) just before the organization returned to being an independent entity
3. The brand created in the 2000s for engineered composites and solid surface
4. Term for when gelcoat yellows in the dark
7. Widely used material for the industry initially created for U.S. military
9. City where the first convention outside the U.S. was held
10. The name of the first association for the industry
12. City where the first supplier/manufacturers meeting was held
13. Maximum number of regionals the association had at one time
14. Man for whom the Pinnacle Award is named

Answers on page 26

# Atlanta

# POLYTECH

**BUILDING A SOLID FUTURE TOGETHER**

## September 18-20, 2023

at the Hilton/Atlanta Marietta Hotel & Conference Center

PolyTech Training will be hosted by manufacturer members:

**Synmar & Castech**  
Jonesboro, GA

**AGCO, Inc.**  
Norcross, GA

### JOIN US IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA!

- Business Development & Networking
- Vendor Exhibits & Presentations
- Exclusive, Member-ONLY Sessions
- Industry Regulatory Updates
- Women in the Industry Roundtable
- Plant Tours & Demos
- Breakouts & Round-table Discussions
- Event awards dinner
- And so much more!

2023 Platinum Sponsors



# REGISTER TODAY!

[www.TheICPA.com](http://www.TheICPA.com)

## Register now for POLYCON Atlanta 2023



Registration for ICPA's annual conference, POLYCON Atlanta 2023, began in May. For specifics on the meeting, see page 14.

The event is September 18 to 20 at the Hilton Atlanta/Marietta Hotel & Conference Center, Marietta, GA.

To register and receive updated information, go to [www.TheICPA.com](http://www.TheICPA.com).

## ICPA board changes occurring

ICPA recently had two supporters of the industry who left the board of directors.

The board and association congratulated Steve Wetzel, vice president of sales at Interplastic Corporation who is retiring after 22 years with the company. Wetzel is a long-time contributor to the cast polymer industry and its association, most recently serving on the board for five years. His slot on the board will be filled by Christopher Deel of Interplastic.



The board and association also thanked ReBecca Erdmann, co-owner of Sand & Swirl, Inc., who resigned her seat on the board after serving five years. For two of those years, she was ICPA's president.

Also, nominations are now being accepted for new candidates interested in serving on the board for the term that begins July 1.

## New software for membership administration

ICPA has put new software into place to help with membership efforts. The Glueup software package makes it easier to register as members, to connect with other members and to register for events. Event schedules and a list of event attendees will also be available on the platform.

The new platform also has an application designed for mobile devices. To get that tool, go to the application store for your phone and download My GlueUp.

## It's time to renew your membership

June is membership renewal month. Member reminders went out beginning in May and fees for the year are due on

or before July 1.

Don't miss out on these opportunities:

- Attending the association's two major events: POLYCON, which is September 18 to 20 in Atlanta, GA and the mid-year, members-only networking event, The Buzz, which is held in April.
- The members-only section of the ICPA website, which features many technical and regulatory documents critical to the cast polymer industry as well as how-to, educational and technical videos created from past events and other resources.
- An opportunity to connect to a network of manufacturers and suppliers who work together to solve common production and operations challenges.
- The chance to create new business contacts and network with professional friends.
- Access to resources for programs such as certification courses, the LiveGroutFree network, The SAFE PLANT program, styrene testing and more.

For more information on membership, contact Membership Director Beth Kubinec at [Beth@theicpa.com](mailto:Beth@theicpa.com).

## Designer Marble Colors™

by BroCom

- \* *Color consistency from Lot to Lot*
- \* *Money back guarantee*
- \* *Showroom quality color catalog*
- \* *Quality dry pigments for Cultured Marble & Solid Surface*
- \* *Free color matching*
- \* *Free 3oz pigment sample (stock colors only)*
- \* *Over 90 colors in stock*

**At BroCom we don't just**

**follow quality**

**standards - we set them.**

**BroCom Corporation**

719-392-5537 – 888-392-5808

[www.marblecolors.com](http://www.marblecolors.com)



### Marshall-Gruber closing its doors



**MARSHALL GRUBER COMPANY**

After many years of supplying products to the cast polymer industry, The Marshall-Gruber Company, LLC, is closing its facility at 220

Airport Drive, Mansfield, TX and ceasing all operations.

According to the company, the decision was made because of slowing economic conditions, which led to low demand for manufacturer products, rising raw material costs and excessive employee turnover. All of these have resulted in a non-profitable operation.

The shutdown will occur gradually and the company is now filling all existing and accepted customer purchase orders, a process that it expects will be completed by November 30, 2023.

For information on what's happening, contact Larry Blake, vice president of sales at 314.486.0132.

The board of directors and ICPA thanked the company for its long history of support for the cast polymer industry and its companies.

### Live Grout Free site has new featured manufacturers

The Live Group Free website has added several companies to



the featured manufacturers on the site. Featured manufacturers get free exposure through

the efforts of the website, which is designed to inform the general public about the benefits of products that are free of the grout that plagues many homeowners and building owners today.

The newly added manufacturers include:

- Marble Works of Middle Georgia
- Synmar & Castech
- Customer Marble Inc.
- Monroe Industries.

To become a featured manufacturer, contact ICPA Executive Director Jennifer Towner at [jennifer@theicpa.com](mailto:jennifer@theicpa.com).

### Send ICPA your memories!

As the association celebrates its 50th anniversary (see page 18), it needs the thoughts and resources that only long-time

## FOR ALL YOUR MOLD RELEASE REQUIREMENTS



**Professional Quality Materials**

*Formulated Exclusively for the Reinforced Composites and Cast Polymer Industries*



Paste Wax ★ Liquid Wax ★ Semi-Permanent ★ Polishing Compounds



[www.trmoldrelease.com](http://www.trmoldrelease.com) ★ [info@trmoldrelease.com](mailto:info@trmoldrelease.com) ★ Phone 800 243-3272

# Celebrating 50 Years of Moving Forward with Forward Thinking

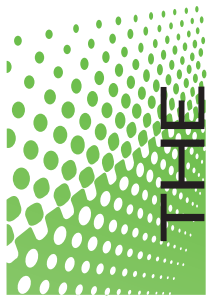
## MEMBERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- Make & maintain vital connections
- Establish new business relationships
- Join in on various training opportunities
- Maintain safe work environments
- Participate in marketing campaigns
- Stay informed on the latest standards

~ **SEPTEMBER 18-20, 2023** ~  
IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA

**POLYCON**  
BUILDING A SOLID FUTURE TOGETHER  
ICPA Members Receive Substantial Discounts

STAYING CONNECTED, MOVING FORWARD  
AND RISING-UP STRONGER THAN EVER!



**ICPA**  
INTERNATIONAL CAST POLYMER ASSOCIATION



**Better  
TOGETHER**

Join more than 90 international Manufacturers & Suppliers  
who are taking advantage of the many membership benefits.

JOIN OR RENEW MEMBERSHIP ONLINE: [www.TheICPA.com](http://www.TheICPA.com)



industry members can provide.

Send your photos, old newsletters, articles, old brochures and other industry and association materials to Jennifer Towner at [jennifer@theicpa.com](mailto:jennifer@theicpa.com)

**Welcome new member**

ICPA added a new company recently to the membership rolls:

- Prestige Tooling, Elkhart Indiana  
[www.prestigetooling.com](http://www.prestigetooling.com)

**Answers to puzzle on page 21**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Atlanta                               | 11. [Certified] Composites Technician    |
| 2. Garages                               | 12. Chicago                              |
| 3. Mastercast                            | 13. Ten                                  |
| 4. Yellowing in the Box                  | 14. Royce Newsom                         |
| 5. Marblecon                             | 15. Arlington                            |
| 6. Texas                                 | 16. Cookbook                             |
| 7. Resin                                 | 17. Piedmont Piper                       |
| 8. [International] Cast Polymer Alliance | 18. Suppliers                            |
| 9. London                                | 19. Composites Fabricators [Association] |
| 10. Cultured Marble Institute            |  |

## Superior Color Systems Since 1975

Almost a half century ago American Colors began formulating colorants for the Cast Polymer Industry. Thousands of color matches and timeless beauty are the result. When you have a color idea, call American Colors. Let's make your dream a reality.



**AMERICAN COLORS® INC.**

Sandusky OH | Gallatin TN | Lebanon TN  
Seguin TX | Shanghai PRC

[www.AmericanColors.com](http://www.AmericanColors.com)

(continued from page 18)

a committee, chaired by Mike Smith, that spent countless hours and lots of money on this project, but politics became too great an obstacle. We have retained the focus on technical issues and quality, but it's taken on different forms.

**What was important to you as a member? What stories can you tell?**

In the early days of my involvement, regional meetings were the highlight. Many good friendships were formed. The association and its meetings were a family affair and everyone was welcome. Other regions were even more active than ours (Mid-America Cultured Marble Association}. At one point there seemed to be a cultured marble shop on every street in Florida. The most notable organizations were the Cultured Marble Association of the South and the Piedmont Cultured Marble Association. Such groups led the movement to have multi-regional meetings, which also were very successful.

As with the industry, the association has evolved into a mature organization with new challenges and solutions, and while the regionals have lost ground, the national association is strong and evolving.

I don't have any good stories (that are fit to print!) about my years. I will just say, however, that the national, multi-regional and regional meetings have been a lot of fun and certainly good for the brewing and spirits industries.

I will also say that I've made many friends and acquaintances over the years that I valued. This is why the association exists, and I'm glad to have been part of it. ■

**ADVERTISERS IN THIS ISSUE...**

**Cast Polymer Connection** thanks all the advertisers in this issue for being annual supporters of our publication. Contact Jennifer Towner at [Jennifer@TheICPA.com](mailto:Jennifer@TheICPA.com) or 470-219-8139 for information on advertising.

3	ACS International .....	<a href="http://www.acsinternational.com">www.acsinternational.com</a>
27	AOC Resins .....	<a href="http://www.aocresins.com">www.aocresins.com</a>
26	American Colors .....	<a href="http://www.americancolors.com">www.americancolors.com</a>
23	BroCom Corporation .....	<a href="http://www.marblecolors.com">www.marblecolors.com</a>
25	ICPA membership .....	<a href="http://www.theicpa.com">www.theicpa.com</a>
22	ICPA POLYCON .....	<a href="http://www.theicpa.com">www.theicpa.com</a>
28	Interplastic Corporation .....	<a href="http://www.interplastic.com">www.interplastic.com</a>
8	Omya Inc. ....	<a href="http://www.omya.com">www.omya.com</a>
20	RESPECTA Maschinenbau GmbH .....	<a href="http://www.respecta.com">www.respecta.com</a>
19	The R.J. Marshall Company .....	<a href="http://www.rjmarshall.com">www.rjmarshall.com</a>
24	TR Industries .....	<a href="http://www.trindustries.com">www.trindustries.com</a>



# AOC

Trusted Solutions



AOC's Vicast resins and Chroma-Tek pigments are specially formulated for cultured marble, onyx, granite, solid surface, and other cast polymer applications.

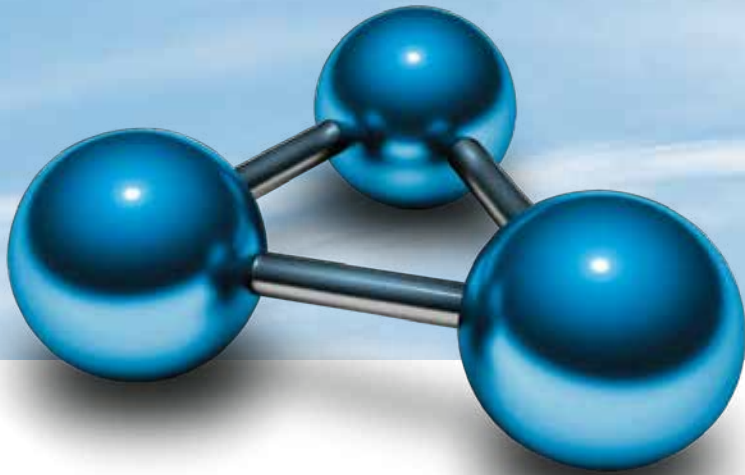
- Consistent color & quality
- Versatility to match any process
- Unmatched technical support

**Vicast**<sup>®</sup>  
CASTING RESINS

**Chroma-Tek**<sup>®</sup>  
COLORANTS & ADDITIVES

[aocresins.com](http://aocresins.com) |  [@AOCresins](https://twitter.com/AOCresins)

+01 866.319.8827



## We Have a Formula for your Success

Silmar resins consistently deliver optimum performance, more clears, uniform color and the highest quality. Whatever distinct characteristics you need, we have an innovative solution that exceeds your expectations. Separate your products from the competition with Silmar.