



A number of glass companies helped define green on the Greenbuild trade show floor.

# Glass Defines Green

**Greenbuild Exhibition Becomes  
Education Platform for Glass Exhibitors**

by Megan Headley

**T**he term “green” encompassed a wide variety of definitions at Greenbuild, the U.S. Green Building Council’s (USGBC) annual exhibition, which took place in November in Chicago. A number of companies on the trade show floor exemplified just how green glass can be in a wide variety of ways.

Tim Cole, chair of the USGBC board of directors, opened the exhibition by commenting on the wide range of companies at the show as “an experience ... we haven’t seen under one roof before.” Cole pointed out that companies at the show ranged from start-ups to “giants” of technology, but “we’re all in the same business—the business of saving our planet.”

Due to the diverse nature of the nearly 30,000 attendees at Greenbuild, glass industry exhibitors kept busy explaining how their products are part of the green movement.

Schott’s Karen Wegert said she was “really pleased this year” with the traffic coming through. The show floor was



**Kawneer representatives say the company is working to make custom “standard.”**

packed with attendees from a variety of professions. “We’ve had a lot of people come by who are familiar with the product,” Wegert said. For those attendees not familiar with Schott’s glass products, she focused the green message on the company’s Cradle to Cradle® (C2C) certification of its Pyran Platinum fire-rated glass products. She said several attendees have asked why Schott focuses on “C2C as opposed to other labels?” She pointed out that this certification has high recognition among their target audience of architects and is connected with the LEED program, making it a good choice for their company.

Michael Krasula of Pilkington focused on the basics, sharing with attendees “in general that glass is a good alternative.”

Krasula was among the representatives for several primary glass manufacturers who explained to attendees the value that glass can offer—when balanced with shading solutions. He said he addressed the misconception that 50, 60—even

40—percent visible light transmittance is the best solution for getting daylight credits through LEED—since building occupants are likely to pull their blinds and forget about the daylight. “In theory daylight is great, but there needs to be a balance,” Krasula said.

To provide that balance, there were a great many shading solutions on the show floor. Boyd Aluminum was among the many companies providing a sunshade, but offered a very unique one. What made this unique product was that the sunshade is attached to an operable window. The combination of natural ventilation and a shading solution have proved attractive to this audience.

Indeed, the latest trend for window products seems to be doing more—combining thermal performance and impact resistance for example.

EFCO’s Eric Enloe said his company’s message to attendees was that “we’re not trying to lessen the structural capabilities to give you thermal performance.”

Displaying that message was the company’s XTherm products, including its HX45 high performance double-hung windows, which offers a number of options to reach a low U-factor.

Mike Turner was excited to demonstrate YKK AP’s new iPad app at a show where half the attendees seemed to have that particular device under their arm. The dynamic myThermalAssistant utility allows users to enter in a glass and frame type to get a thermal performance number, or enter then needed performance to get recommendations of products to use. Upon glancing at what the app turned up, attendees got a look at the products themselves, particularly the enerGfacade® 750 XT curtainwall sample, which Turner said had been the subject of a lot of interest at the show.

“It gives you excellent thermal performance using standard industry glass,” Turner explained, adding that an advanced glass package can get the product below a U-factor of 0.20.

What’s next was a question being asked at the Kawneer booth. While sev-

eral recent introductions have focused on highly customizable products, the latest ones are to make custom standard. For example, the company’s Robert Holcombe noted that its Versoleil sunshade, “the start of a sun control line,” allows the installer to adjust the angle by 5 degree increments, in horizontal or vertical applications. This allows the new sunshade to be specified across the country.

“What’s exciting is there’s a lot of versatility—but it’s a standard product,” pointed out Diana Perreiah, general manager for Kawneer. Donnie Hunter noted that the 501UT framing system introduced last year offers more options as part of a complete stock package system—it provides thermal performance and now hurricane-resistance.

As Glen Morrison, president of Kawneer parent company Alcoa Building and Construction, pointed out, “The more we can talk about façades to our customers, the better.”

Alcoa is able to talk about more façade options now courtesy of its acquisition of Traco in early 2010 (*see July 2010 USGlass, page 14*). Traco revealed its recent rebranding initiative at the show. Morrison said the focus was on having the two companies leverage one another’s strengths. “We want [Traco] to work alongside Kawneer,” he said.

Perreiah pointed out that both companies have key synergies on the sales and product development sides and are able to help customers purchase products in a one-stop fashion.

“You really do need a certain critical mass to play the game,” Morrison said.

The combined synergies also allow Traco and Kawneer to pull from Alcoa’s “innovation center” in Europe and pull in worldwide technology developments.

In looking at future growth, one can’t help but wonder what’s next on the horizon for the company. According to Morrison, what’s next is “more and more understanding of how all the pieces fit together.” He said that the company, and industry at large, will continue to focus on making systems

more “intelligent” and pulling all of the pieces of the building together. “The whole drive to net-zero applications drives innovations,” Morrison added.

For Holcombe, it’s about the technology. He pointed out that recent product introductions focus on “built-ons” to existing polyamide technology, for example.

“What is the next thermal break technology, that’s what I’m hungry for,” Holcombe said.

### Aesthetic and Unusual

For the glass industry, Lindernink Technologies took an aesthetic approach to green. The company wants its micro-thin wood veneers to be utilized in more glass products. Tom Lindernink said the veneers—which include cork and bamboo among other wood types—have been used in decorative applications within several glass products. “Our goal is to move more into this glass business,” he said. In holding the sample veneers up to the convention center light, Lindernink demonstrated how the veneer can provide a classic wood look, while allowing light to pass through applications such as office partitions.

NanaWall meanwhile interpreted green differently—the company promoted its Ornilux “bird-friendly” product. The glass features a coating designed to reflect ultraviolet light that will warn birds of glass-clad high rises. Company representatives say they’re the first in the U.S. to offer such a product.

### Active and Films

Southwall Technologies introduced what it’s calling a next-generation launch of its 30-year-old Heat Mirror product. The Heat Mirror 88S may not look different from the original product used on such projects as the recent Empire State Building retrofit but it offers new technical properties that John Meade said will open up new opportunities for the company and commercial product fabricators. The company has partnered with Dow Corning to develop a new 2-part structural silicone sealant to work with an updated version of the film; previously the Heat Mirror film had worked



**YKK AP displayed its new iPad app and the systems that the myThermalAssistant utility allows users to lookup.**

only with a 1-part sealant. Meade explained that this will drastically reduce lead times on getting the product out.

“We’re looking for the next-generation technology,” said Jennifer Kempf at Dow Corning.

In addition, Meade said, the company is able to offer improve efficiency of insulating glass units by providing two suspended films within the unit—avoiding extra weight from extra lites of glass. Meade said that the audience at Greenbuild quickly grasped the impact of that reduced weight as LEED promotes the use of operable windows for natural ventilation.

In some cases the solution for “doing more” is an active glazing product. Alongside its detention glazing products, Dlubak displayed its Green Heat product. Damon Dlubak said the heated window is “really close” to commercial deployment as the company finalizes its testing through UL.

For active shading strategies, Pleotint showcased a sunlight responsive thermochromic technology, which automatically tints as the sun hits it and lightens when direct sunlight is no longer present. According to Fred Millett, the film “basically absorbs light energy and turns it into heat and the heat is what causes the change from more

transmissive to less transmissive.”

Glass manufacturers can incorporate the company’s film as a unique shading solution for building owners. Millett pointed out to attendees the green aspect of the new product, which include “keeping the view; minimizing the energy for not having to have artificial lights on when you’ve got daylighting; and minimizing the direct solar heat gain, which means you don’t have to have air-conditioning on, or as much air-conditioning because you don’t have as much sun energy penetrating the building envelope.”

Sage Electrochromics had its dynamic glazing product on display as well. Lou Podbelski, who educated attendees about how the active glazing product works and its green benefits, pointed out that sharing the green message at this show is drastically different from other industry shows, making it valuable for product suppliers focusing on the green message. “They’re already predisposed to the message,” he said of the attendees. ■

### the author



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