

# The Link

Newsletter | September 2021



## More than Just Talk

by Linda Jovanovich  
HMA Executive Vice President



It's National Conference and Expo planning time, and as I was 'organizing' my NatCon 2022 folders, I came across a slip of paper with a

quote by leadership expert, Mark Sanborn. "Success isn't always about meeting your goals," Sanborn said. "It's also about meeting your challenges." Hmm...

That sounds really good, right? Inspirational and encouraging? But here's the challenging part. How exactly do we do that? How exactly do we meet the challenges and obstacles blocking our success? (Here comes my soapbox speech.)

From where I sit:

- Success hinges upon embracing change and technology, looking to other resources and alternative processes to help us accomplish today's goals and tomorrow's dreams.
- Relying on the "same old, same old" will get us nowhere. But changing our MO—*modus operandi*—and expanding our frame of reference...that's how we'll hurdle the stumbling blocks that are limiting our forward progress.



In the coming months, as NatCon 2022 plans take shape, you'll likely hear more on this topic. So, let's plan on discussing "the future" in greater detail when we see each other, March 23–25, in Miramar Beach, Florida.

I'll end this month's column with a shout-out to all who contributed to the success of our recent Summer Regional Meeting. To the great people at the **Yoder Lumber** Buckhorn and Berlin facilities; to our tour sponsors, **Eagle Machinery & Supply, Inc.**, **Stiles Machinery, Inc.**, and **TallyExpress by DMSi**; and to all who participated in the virtual event, thank you! What a super experience.

And for our HMA members who were unable to participate with us on August 11, a recording of the

Summer Regional Tour is available in the Members Only/Virtual Events section of [HMAmembers.org](https://HMAmembers.org). There is much to see, and it will not disappoint.

## Also In This Month's Issue

- Promoting American Hardwoods in 50 Words or Less
- Your Voice on Capitol Hill
- Is Your Social Media Strategy Working?
- ITR Forecasting Free Trial Offer
- Finding the Ideal Mentor
- Why Leaves Change Color
- 10-Minute Workout Anywhere

## Promoting American Hardwoods™ in 50 Words or Less

It used to be that those charged with promoting American Hardwoods™ had up to 120 seconds to successfully deliver their hardwood elevator speech—you know, the attention-getting message stating that products made from sustainable and environmentally friendly American Hardwoods are preferred over all others for their durability, extraordinary beauty, and timeless appeal.

Today's information seekers, however, are ultra-short on patience, and these days, the window of opportunity to get and hold their attention is more like 30 seconds—or even less. Honing our hardwood “commercial” to fit within that window of opportunity can be challenging. Nevertheless, the **American Hardwood Information Center (AHIC)** is up to the task. For example...

When AHIC wants to share our message with the designers and architects in and around the greater New York City area, we must do it in 50 words or less. That's the word-count limit that the International Furnishings and Design Association (IFDA)—the “voice” of the furnishings and design industry—allows for their newsletter. Less is more for them. And so, AHIC has responded like this:



### American Hardwood—The One that Imitation Products Strive to be

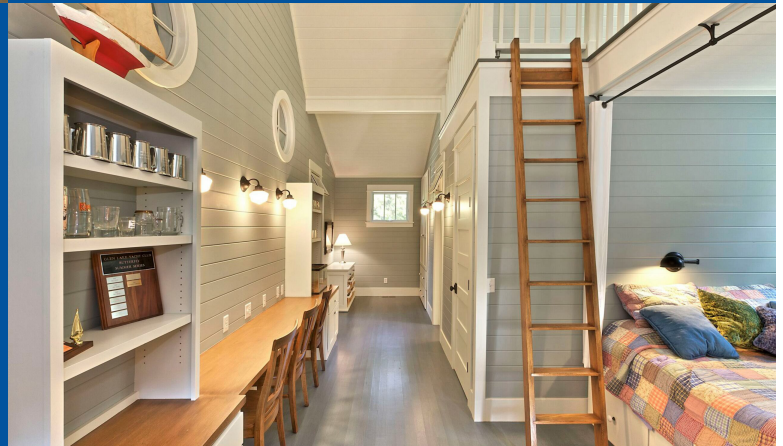
“Real American Hardwood is unique down to its very cells. Grown with purpose and naturally renewing, simple in its ingredients, and strong and durable at its core. A powerful display of the wonder of nature, and the most beautiful building product out there.” Is there more to the American Hardwood story? You bet there is! Visit [HardwoodInfo.com](https://www.hardwoodinfo.com).

*Photo courtesy of DeSai Chia Architecture*

### Supporting Health and Wellness—American Hardwoods

Today's consumers are doing their homework to ensure a “healthy home” environment for their loved ones. They're choosing flooring, cabinetry, and millwork made from all-natural American Hardwoods—because the products are chemical-free, long-lasting, uniquely beautiful, and safe. Research confirms it. Choose American Hardwoods for a healthier home. Visit [HardwoodInfo.com](https://www.hardwoodinfo.com).

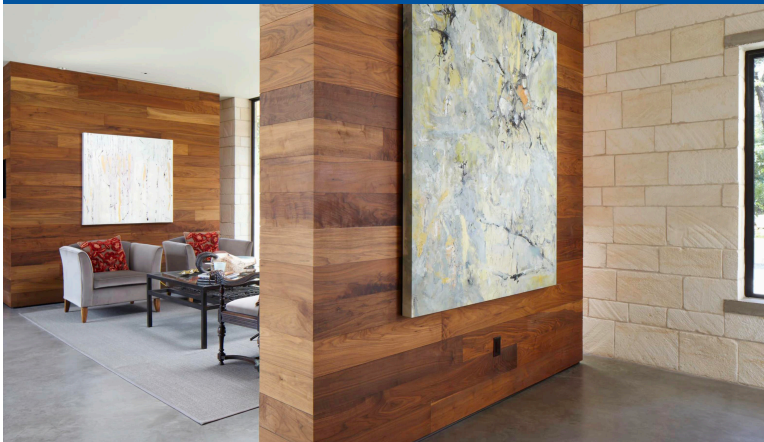
*Photo ©Jason Hulet Photography, courtesy of Mac Custom Homes*



### Mixing it up with American Hardwoods

Looking for fresh and “imaginative ways” to combine all-natural American Hardwoods with other design materials? Then visit the American Hardwood Information Center, [HardwoodInfo.com](https://www.hardwoodinfo.com), for a closer look at what IFDA member, Wendy Silverstein, is suggesting—like incorporating black walnut walls with concrete floors, plaster ceilings and limestone walls—for that one-of-a-kind look!

*Photo ©Andrew Pogue, courtesy of Cornerstone Architects*





## Your Voice on Capitol Hill

by Dana Lee Cole

*Executive Director, Hardwood Federation*



In August, a bipartisan infrastructure package addressing some of President Biden's priorities passed the Senate, as

did a \$3.5 trillion budget framework "blueprint." Now in the House for deliberation, both face an uncertain future, given the Democrat's very narrow majority.

It is likely that the fall session will be consumed by debate over these two legislative efforts. As always, the Hardwood Federation will remain vigilant, and continue its frequent conversations with key House and Senate allies—Democrat and Republican—regarding our sector's concerns and priorities.

But competition for attention and support is intense as our federal government officials hear from a multitude of interest groups—not all of them friendly to the hardwood industry. That's why the Hardwood Federation's efforts on Capitol Hill are more important than ever. And so, we are appealing to all HMA members for your help!

Please consider providing the necessary corporate or personal financial assistance to support the Federation's work plan in 2021 and beyond. To those of you that are already supporters in 2021, thank you for your support and engagement. To those that have yet to contribute, you may do so in one of two ways: either as a corporate or individual contribution.

The bottom line is that now, more than ever, U.S. businesses cannot afford to be without representation. And the Hardwood Federation cannot continue its efforts without financial support from the industry. By contributing how and what you can, you are making an investment in the future of the hardwood industry—and your place in it.



### Corporate Contributions

Companies may contribute to the **Corporate Operating Fund**. These tax-deductible corporate donations support the day-to-day operations of the Washington, D.C., based Federation staff.

Make your corporate contribution [here](#).

### Individual Contributions

Individuals may make personal contributions to the **Hardwood Federation Political Action Committee (HFPAC)**. HFPAC is an important tool that assists the Federation in opening doors to policy makers by providing financial support to Capitol Hill friends who understand hardwood industry issues, and work with us to ensure a healthy business environment.

Individuals interested in contributing to HFPAC may do so [here](#).

# Save the Date





**HMA National Conference and Expo**

March 23–25, 2022

Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort

Miramar Beach, Florida

## Is Your Social Media Strategy Working?

by Ian Faight

Marketing, Communications, and Digital Content Director, HMA

Social media is no longer viewed as a waste of time in the business realm. The various platforms are serving as powerful marketing tools. And while posting content is a regular task, it's vital to periodically evaluate your strategy to see if you're spending your time wisely. Here are a few tips to help measure your success.

### 1. Set Realistic Goals

There are a number of things to evaluate when it comes to social media. How does your company define social media success? Is it growing your audience, generating website traffic, receiving more phone calls and emails, increasing sales, or some other metric?

Set realistic goals, evaluate them periodically, and make adjustments as necessary. Just remember, don't get discouraged if your profiles aren't getting the interaction and results you were expecting. Social media is a marathon, not a sprint.

### 2. Monitor Your Workload

Are you spending too little or too much time on your social media pages? If you find yourself spending a good chunk of time each day or week engaging with your audiences by responding to comments, sharing content, liking posts by other businesses, and following other pages, then you're likely seeing positive and encouraging results.

### 3. Take an Analytic Deep Dive

Take a look at the numbers. Are you noticing more people following your profiles and interacting with your content? This surface-level data provides a glimpse into how your strategy is performing. Here are key vanity metrics to keep an eye on.

■ **Followers** | Your follower count helps you gauge your company's popularity and influence. Generally speaking, as your audience grows, your content is potentially reaching more people. However, your follower count doesn't tell you how active your audience is, whether they're interested in your products and services, or if they're even real people.

■ **Reach** | This metric tells you the total number of people who have seen a particular post. Ideally, every one of your followers would see each post, but unfortunately, that's not always the case.

■ **Impressions** | When your content is seen on someone's feed, that's counted as an impression. And while reach shows unique views, impressions count every time a post is seen, whether directly or via a shared post. One person could account for multiple impressions. However,

this data doesn't tell you what people are doing after they see your content.

■ **Engagements** | Depending on the social platform, you may be able to like, share, and comment on posts. These actions count as engagements and let you know that people are not only seeing you posts, they're also actively engaging with them.

■ **Website Traffic** | Do you use Google Analytics to monitor your company's website traffic? If so, you'll be able to see if your social media profiles are effectively driving traffic to your website. That being said, remember to include links to your website in your social media posts.

### Help is Available

If you have any questions or need assistance getting started on social media, HMA is here to help. Email Ian Faight at [ian@hardwood.org](mailto:ian@hardwood.org) and ask away.

## Free Social Media Guide Available

The Real American Hardwood Coalition recently published a handy resource, titled *Beginner's Guide to Social Media: Tips, Tricks, Dos, and Don'ts*. This guide is available to you for *free* as a tool to help boost your company's presence on various social media platforms—including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn. Download a copy at [RealAmericanHardwood.org](http://RealAmericanHardwood.org).



## Finding the Ideal Mentor



The research on the power of mentorship is pretty clear. "People with mentors perform better, advance in their careers

faster, and even experience more work-life satisfaction. Despite these benefits—and even though 76% of working professionals believe that a mentor is important to growth—more than 54% do not have such a relationship."

According to Mark Horoszowski, cofounder and CEO of [MovingWorlds.org](http://MovingWorlds.org), the problem is finding the 'ideal' mentor and knowing how to develop a relationship that benefits both mentor and protegee. And so, in an article titled, [How to Build a Great Relationship with a Mentor](#), Horoszowski offers assistance in getting the search started.

- **Define Your Goals and Specific Needs** | "Write out your career goals. Make sure they are SMART—specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely. Then, list the biggest obstacles to achieving them. This specificity will help you decide what type of mentor you should be looking for. Maybe you need to develop new skills, expand your network in a specific sector, or build confidence to have some tough conversations. By first understanding where you want to be, as well as the biggest opportunities and gaps to getting there, you'll identify how a mentor can truly be helpful to you."

- **Create a "Job Description" of Your Ideal Mentor** | Be specific here. You need someone to help you accomplish a project, or to make introductions to high level people within a specific industry, or to coach you through a tough negotiation. And be sure to include the "why" in the job description. Just as employers want potential hires to understand the bigger purpose of their firm, explain why mentoring you will tap into something bigger.
- **Make the Ask** | Mentors can be from anywhere—from your LinkedIn network, professional connections, or people you've met at conferences. People are certainly busy, but remember, being asked to be a mentor is a

massive compliment. But take it slow. To determine if this person is the right mentor for you, ask for a conversation to learn more about their work and interests. If there is an alignment, find out whether they are open to the idea of mentoring you."

- **Be Prepared** | The answer may be "no." And you may have to ask several people before finding that 'ideal' someone able and willing to invest the time it will take to help you achieve your goals. Nonetheless, each 'ask' will be a learning experience. So, think big and don't be shy.

*Information source:  
[Harvard Business Review](#)*

## ITR Forecasting Free Trial Offer

ITR Economics, the oldest privately held, continuously operating economic research and consulting firm in the U.S. is offering a 30-day free trial of its forecasting publication, Trends Report™. The singular offer, which "includes four, comprehensive reports covering the complete spectrum of today's U.S. and world economies," also will:

- Assist in preparing for coming economic changes
- Support your internal forecasting
- Identify markets of opportunity or risk
- Increase your competitive advantage



To subscribe for the Trends Report™ FREE trial, and to learn more about ITR Economics, visit [ITReconomics.com](http://ITReconomics.com).

## Why Leaves Change Color

Mother Nature and her plentiful hardwoods will soon be displaying their fall color extravaganza! But what factors contribute to this much appreciated autumn spectacular? And why are some years more colorful than others?

The vivid colors annually showcased by hardwoods are the result of chemical processes that take place in the trees as the seasons change. During spring and summer, the leaves act as factories where most of the foods necessary for the trees' growth are manufactured.

- This food-making process takes place in the leaf, in numerous cells containing chlorophyll, giving the leaf its green color.
- This extraordinary chemical absorbs from sunlight the energy used in transforming carbon dioxide and water to carbohydrates, such as sugars and starch.
- Along with the green pigment are yellow to orange pigments—carotenes and xanthophyll—which most of the year are masked by great amounts of the green coloring.

Then in fall, "because of changes in the length of daylight and changes in temperature, the leaves stop their food-making process. The chlorophyll breaks down; the green color disappears; yellow to orange colors become visible and give the leaves part of their fall splendor.

At the same time, other chemical changes may occur, forming additional colors through the development of red anthocyanin pigments. Some mixtures give rise to the reddish and purplish fall colors of dogwood and sumac trees, while



others give the sugar maple its brilliant orange."

Weather conditions—precipitation, amount of sunlight, temperature—will affect the intensity and duration of the fall colors. "Rainy and/or overcast days tend to increase color intensity. Low temperatures above freezing will favor anthocyanin formation, producing bright reds in maples. Early frost however, will weaken the brilliant red color."

*Information source: State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY ESF), [ESF.edu](http://ESF.edu).*

## 10-Minute Workout Anywhere

Looking to improve your fitness but lacking the time to visit a gym? Not a problem. Browse the American Heart Association (AHA) website at [Heart.org](http://Heart.org) for a quick home workout that will boost both your heart rate and your brain power. After your PCP gives you the green light to exercise, all you'll need is a small space to get started.



AHA's **10-minute workout anywhere**, consists of 10 equipment-free exercises, done at your own pace, each for 30 seconds, with 30 seconds of cardio activity—high knees, march in place, jog in place—between exercises.

### Helpful Tips

- Stabilize yourself by holding or touching a wall, desk, or stationary chair. As you get stronger, test yourself by letting go of the support.
- To add intensity, weights can be small dumbbells, kettlebells of anything you may have at home like a water bottle or gallon jug, backpack, or book. (Or make your own adjustable weight by loading a small tote bag with magazines or books.)



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