

# METALCON 2023 Hits the Jackpot in Las Vegas

---

NEWTON, MA, UNITED STATES, November 28, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Once again, Las Vegas proved to be a phenomenal venue for [METALCON](#). From dynamic exhibits to inspiring keynotes, intensive workshops and free educational sessions, attendees from 50 countries from Australia to Zambia learned from top industry experts and networked with colleagues at the only event dedicated exclusively to the application of metal in design and construction.

"You see the latest and greatest in technology in the industry, but more importantly, you can meet the leaders who have paved the way for us," said Dante Villareal of Midwest Steel Carports in Michigan. "It's a chance for us, once a year, to see what is happening in the industry, connect with each other one-on-one and collectively as players in this industry; that's invaluable. If you are in metal and you are not here, you are missing out."

Kicking off day one of the show was keynote speaker, contractor, and Denver business owner Rico León, HGTV host of "Rico to the Rescue," who shared experiences and lessons learned from managing conflicts between emotionally and financially stressed homeowners and their contractors.

His advice to contractors was, "The best way to avoid problems is having systems and processes in place; having work authorization that actually protects you; communication about the good, bad, ugly; and how you are going to combat that with a solution vs. an excuse."

The Architect's Experience returned to METALCON this year. Architects, specifiers and designers learned from industry experts. On day one, Christopher Sotiropoulos, vice president of stadium operations for Allegiant Stadium and Gary Edgar, manager of architectural specifications and industrial coatings of PPG, discussed the challenges of handling 80 requests for colors and formulas for the various applications of metal at Allegiant Stadium. PPG created 11 different metal coatings required for the different applications of metal from all over the world to ensure consistency of colors across all applications.

On day two of the Architect's Experience, architect and author Stefan Al, delved into the world of architectural innovation and its profound impact on skylines worldwide, particularly in Las Vegas.

"If you look at the latest trends in Las Vegas, it really has set the tone for resort design elsewhere, and the story of Las Vegas is really quite remarkable," said Al. "Everywhere you looked around 80 years ago was just desert. In 2017, the city received 42 million visitors, 10 million more than

Paris. So, what's behind this story; the architecture and design of the resorts played a very large role."

"There is one thing not a lot of people know about Las Vegas," continued Al. "The first developers on the strip were also movie theater operators, so these people had a very close connection with Hollywood and movie stars. This helped them to not only bring celebrities to Las Vegas but also to stay up to date with current trends. As soon as a new type of movie became popular, you would see it reflected in the architecture of the strip."

Also on day two, keynote speaker, Ken Simonson, chief economist of the Associated General Contractors of America, shared his Construction Outlook for 2024. Simonson reported the construction unemployment rate as of September 2023 was 3.8%, with 45 states reporting an increase in construction employment over a one-year period from August 2022 to 2023. However, companies are still finding difficulty filling positions.

"For various reasons, the industry is facing much higher annual wage increases," said Simonson. "The hourly annual earnings figure in construction has gone up more than 5% on a year-over-year basis for two straight years. The last time wages went up that much was 1982 and 1983."

Regarding the cost of materials, Simonson said that although prices have leveled off since early last year, they are still up 37% since February of 2020. "So where do I see these things headed," said Simonson. "I think with materials costs, the flatness is over, and we will see 4-6% increases, and wage costs may go up as much as 7%."

Simonson also covered construction spending. From August 2022 to 2023, single-family construction was down 15%, and multi-family construction was up 25%, but he says that is about to change. Census data shows single-family starts have risen for eight straight months with many incentives available, but multi-family is the opposite with a 30% drop in multi-family permits and starts. The highest segment of non-residential construction spending is in manufacturing, brought about by the Build America Buy America Act among other factors.

"I remain optimistic about the economy; I confess to being a serial optimist," said Simonson. "By and large, businesses are still increasing, many showing profits, certainly investing more, and governments at all levels are putting lots of money into different kinds of spending, so I think we will continue to see job growth. We are seeing wages go up faster than inflation, so things are looking healthier in terms of consuming spending power and other parts of the economy. There are risks, but I think overall the balance of risk is for further growth."

A special keynote was added on the third day. Christian "Boo" Boucousis, CEO of global organizational performance at Afterburner and former fighter pilot demonstrated the fighter pilot mindset, "Flawless Execution"—plan, brief, execute and debrief. He outlined the eight steps to decision-making and the importance of adding one step to the decision-making loop—the debrief.

“Debriefing culture saves organizations; debriefing culture is the power that drives sustained performance,” said Boo. “Studies show that a debrief culture in an organization delivers 300% more for the same amount of outcome for one-third the effort—the choice is yours.”

New this year was the METALCON Training Zone, providing hands-on demonstration and training area for contractors, remodelers, installers and others to sharpen their skills utilizing a variety of metal materials and focused on proper detailing and utilization of the right tools (offered in both English and Spanish).

“It’s been a really wonderful opportunity to meet with other people who are excited about the craft,” said Andrew Kiehn, Ever-Green Construction Roofing. “It’s fun getting to meet people who are so excited to learn something new and to improve not only their own craft but really build the industry as well.”

Also new this year and extremely popular, women of metal construction gathered alongside fellow inspiring women and listened and learned from peers who are shaping the industry in “Metal and Mimosas.” METALCON is planning to further develop women’s programming next year.

The show included nearly 250 leading companies exhibiting the latest metal construction industry products and technology and was supported by a number of associations, including ABAA, AIA Ca, AWTI, FMA, MBMA, MBCEA, MCA, MRA, NAWIC, NRCA, NWIR, RAINA among others.

“METALCON keeps us on the edge of the market, knowing exactly what is out there and staying up to date with innovations that can improve our business,” said Ben Harbort of Western Building Group, architectural façade installer from Mesa, Arizona.

Quality and Product Development Manager, Drelis Crossley of Steel Dynamics, Inc., agrees. “We are here to see some of our customers, see what innovations are out there and different applications. It is a great opportunity to interact with new products, customers and suppliers—all under one roof at one time.”

METALCON 2024 takes place in Atlanta from Oct. 30-Nov. 1 at the Georgia World Congress Center. For more information, visit [www.metalcon.com](http://www.metalcon.com).

METALCON  
METALCON  
+1 800-537-7765  
[info@metalcon.com](mailto:info@metalcon.com)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/671228583>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.