

Marketing Practices of the Urban and Recycled Wood Industry in the United States

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Abstract : In the United States, trees felled in urban areas and wood generated through construction and demolition are primarily disposed of as low-value resources, such as biomass for energy, landscaping mulch, composting, or landfilled. An emerging industry makes use of these underutilized resources to produce high value-added products, with associated benefits for the environment, the local economy, and consumers. For the circular economy to be successful, markets must be created for sustainable, reusable natural materials. Research was carried out to increase the understanding of the marketing practices of urban and reclaimed wood industries. This paper presents the results of a nationwide survey of these companies. The results indicate that a majority of companies in this industry are small firms, operating for less than 10 years, which produce mostly to order and sell their products at comparatively higher prices than competing products made from virgin natural resources. Promotional messages included quality, aesthetics, and customization, conveyed through company webpages, word of mouth, and social media. Distribution channels used include direct sales, online sales, and retail sales. Partnerships are critical for effective raw material procurement. Respondents indicated optimistic growth expectations, despite barriers associated with urban and reclaimed wood materials and production.

Keywords : urban and reclaimed wood, circular economy, marketing, wood products

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