



FORTUNE BRANDS NEW PRODUCT ALERT

Tool Storage Leader Waterloo Industries Introduces Tool Dock Modular Workstations for the Workshop; Innovation Wins Acclaim at National Hardware Show

Lincolnshire, IL, September 4, 2001 - Waterloo Industries, the tool storage business of consumer products company Fortune Brands, Inc. (NYSE: FO), is pioneering a new product category with its introduction of modular workstations for the workshop. Waterloo's new Tool Dock modular workstations fill a void in the do-it-yourself marketplace by providing a versatile, affordable system to build a workshop unit by unit. Tool Dock's unique lock and load feature allows home woodworkers to quickly and effortlessly move their own benchtop power tools into the Tool Dock workstations and lock them into place. That means woodworkers can spend less time setting up and more time on their passion - woodworking.

Unveiled at the recent National Hardware Show in Chicago, Tool Dock won a Popular Mechanics Editor's Choice Award as one of the most significant new hardware products of 2001. Tool Dock will be available through several major retailers beginning in October. Waterloo's Tool Dock launch announcement follows and more information is available at www.tooldock.com.

Professional and novice woodworkers and DIYers will have something new for their Christmas Wish Lists this year when Tool Dock, The Modular Workshop hits the shelves in October.

Developed by Waterloo Industries, the world leader in tool storage products, Tool Dock is the culmination of two years of research and development focusing on the needs of woodworking and DIY enthusiasts.

"We involved avid woodworkers in all phases of the research and development of Tool Dock," said Gary Marcus, senior manager of marketing for Waterloo Industries. "Waterloo Industries set up prototypes for woodworking club members ranging from hobbyists to professional woodworkers. From those sessions and other research, we heard how woodworkers define their ideal workshop. And we believe that Tool Dock is the answer to their wish list."

"These units are definitely made for folks like me," commented one focus group participant, who categorized himself as an intermediate-level woodworker. "I don't have a lot of room for a full-sized, professional-style workshop, and Tool Dock gives me the flexibility I need to have a lot of different tools in a pretty moderate space."

"These units are fantastic space-savers," explained Marcus. "They feature quick-change, locking tool insert tops, allowing the user to change tools quickly and conveniently. In a small shop environment, for example, a single Tool Dock workstation can be used with all of a woodworker's bench-mounting shop tools. You simply unlock the insert, shelve the tool on the convenient Tool Dock Tool Crib unit, choose another tool, drop it in, lock it down, and you're back to work."

Advantages of Modular Workshop

Because Tool Dock workstations are modular - available individually or in a group - they are especially attractive to start-up craftspersons.

"I just started getting into wood-oriented crafts and activities last fall," said a novice woodworker and craftsperson. "I really haven't taken the time to organize a workspace yet, and I tend to 'borrow' space from my husband's construction business. Now, I can put the Tool Dock stations on my 'wish list' and build my own shop area piece by piece."

This part-time contractor found a combination of Tool Dock workstations helpful. "I work a lot of projects alone, so I always need an extra hand when I'm ripping long boards on my table saw. Tool Dock workstations are height adjustable when you assemble them, so you can set your table saw to be level with a Tool Dock shop bench and use the bench as a third hand to help catch the wood as it leaves the saw."

Features & Flexibility Add Value

Other testers highlighted the Tool Dock special features as the keys to the products' appeal. The Tool Dock dust collection

trays, for example, connect easily to home shop-vacuums, an option that one focus group participant said "keeps my garage shop from turning into a sawdust storm."

Many woodworkers identified the flexibility of the Tool Dock system as the number-one feature.

"Our research indicated that woodworkers are very specific when it comes to shop configurations," noted Troy Moller, Waterloo Industries senior manager of product development. "Our focus group participants all expressed the desire to have their shops set up their way, and no two woodworkers had the same organization scheme. With this in mind, we developed the Tool Dock system to be flexible enough to work with woodworkers' customized shop pieces. After all, the less time they spend setting up their shops and building workbenches, the more time they can be doing what they love - woodworking."

Tool Dock, The Modular Workshop hits the shelves in several major retail chains this October. For more information or to locate a Tool Dock retailer in your area, visit the Tool Dock web site at www.tooldock.com or call 866-TOOLDOCK (866-866-5362).

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