

MEET VAL SIGMON

An interview with the new DASMA president



By Vicki Jones, Editor

In January, Val Sigmon of Amarr was elected president of the Door & Access Systems Manufacturers Association (DASMA) when Michel Gendreau's two-year term concluded.

Sigmon is the president of Amarr, an ASSA ABLOY company founded in 1951 with 1600 team members.

We talked to the manufacturing association's new president to get his perspective on the current state of the industry and his vision for the association during the next two years.

1. You have always seemed to be a very approachable and down-to-earth leader who is respected by his employees. How would you describe your management style at Amarr?

I passionately believe in a servant leadership management style. This style allows me to engage with all parts of the organization to understand the needs of our team members and our customers so that actions can be developed to meet these needs.

A key aspect is to empower team members to make decisions to take care of the customer. My job as a leader is to give people the resources and tools to be successful. Simply put, I am here to serve them, not the other way around.

2. From a leader's perspective, what do you consider the biggest issue affecting the industry right now?

Over the past two years with a global pandemic that included supply chain shortages, inflationary costs, and a shrinking labor pool, it is difficult to choose which is the biggest. The easy answer is supply chain challenges, but focusing on our people in our company and the industry will help us best manage through the challenges the market brings.

All businesses are a collection of people, nothing less and nothing more. For me it is crucial that we get more people engaged in our industry. This is a healthy, growing industry and we need to develop and keep our talent as well as recruit people into it.

3. DASMA recently announced the valuable progress the association has made regarding the Thermal Verification Performance program. Why are these changes important for the industry and the association?

The thermal performance program is a key step in our industry to provide more reliable and helpful information to architects and end users to make informed buying decisions. Great progress has been made by Doug Geeslin and numerous other DASMA members to get us to this point.

Driving education of U-factor to architects and end users will be crucial, so they understand how the insulated sectional door improves the energy efficiency of an enclosed structure. Sustainability within construction continues to be important, and insulated doors can be a contributing factor to thermal performance.

4. During your two-year term as president, what are your primary goals for DASMA?

The first goal is to continue to build engagement within the organization. After two years of remote meetings, we had good attendance at our annual meeting in Florida in January. It is important that all members participate in our various meeting sessions so all voices are heard and DASMA can continue to drive action to improve our industry.

Our industry is changing and becoming more diverse, so our organization needs to represent this same change at all levels. If not, we are at risk of not understanding current market needs and becoming less relevant.

Secondly, it is important to continue to drive industry alignment and awareness of the thermal performance program. Key next steps are to ensure manufacturers' participation with the start of testing and marketing implementation.

Finally, my goal is to continue collaboration with IDA and IDEA to ensure that we are collectively supporting all aspects of our industry. It is crucial that IDA be successful with

the new Expo+ and Educon events as well as ensuring that IDEA continues to develop content that is desired and needed in the industry.

5. What are the unique contributions that DASMA brings to the industry, and what are the benefits of being a member of the association?

This is my fourth year of being involved in DASMA, and I have been amazed at how engaged the membership is to ensure all issues are being addressed whether they be standard, code, or regulatory related. It is gratifying to see all manufacturers work together towards a common purpose.

Membership allows you to be included in the discussions on what actions to take within the industry. You cannot impact the game if you are on the sideline, you must get into it. I challenge all those who are eligible to be part of DASMA and are not already members or associate members to reach out to myself or someone involved in DASMA to learn more about the organization and to get involved. ■

VAL SIGMON PROFILE

Education

1995: Bachelor's degree — Industrial Relations and Psychology from the University of North Carolina

2007: MBA from Wake Forest University — Babcock Graduate School of Management

Career path

Started with Amarr straight out of college

1995: Door Center Manager for Amarr

1997: District Manager for Amarr

2002: Director of National Accounts for Amarr

2010-2017: Several executive-level positions (including Executive Vice President)

November 2017: Promoted to President of Amarr

Industry leadership

2019-2021: DASMA Board Member and Vice President

2018-2019: DASMA Board of Directors