

Bigger is Better

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In the tool world this whole notion that bigger is better is not always the case. In particular I am looking at impact drivers today. While at the International Builders Show in Las Vegas, I had a good chance to put my hands on a number of different impact drivers. What used to take a heavy duty, corded, 1/2" chucked drill like a Milwaukee Magnum to put in a 1/2" x 4" lag bolt, you now can do with a little cordless 14.4 Makita impact driver. Granted they are two different types of tools, but they both accomplish the same thing with the upper hand going to the new lines of impact driver type tools. They are small, lightweight, cordless and have only a small hex quick change chuck. As stronger, lighter-weight materials become available along with new battery and motor technology, I think we will continue to see more of the idea that smaller is better.

The same is true of framing hammers. I was convinced that my weight forward 24-ounce framer was the way to go. It has a comfortable handle, magnetic nail starter and looks really cool. But that changed once I got my hands on a Stiletto all Titanium TiBone hammer. I thought that only golf ball drivers were a good use of titanium until now. The TiBone hammer weighed in at only 15 ounces yet provided the hitting power of a 28 ounce steel hammer and had a solid titanium head and handle. It took only a few swings to prove that this lightweight has all the benefits of its heavier steel counterpart. While at the Stiletto booth, I learned that titanium is better at transferring energy, absorbing vibration and is 45% lighter than steel.

With new technology, materials and methods, we are getting tools that let us work smarter and not harder. Like all things in life, if they are taken in perspective, most things can be better but bigger does not always equal better.