New DEWALT Study Identifies Emerging Gap Between AI Training in Trade Schools and Industry Needs

- *Survey cites that while the majority of construction pros believe AI will be indispensable within five years, only 8% are currently using AI on the job*
- *Majority of construction pros say AI training must be embedded in trade schools*
- *DEWALT is launching a pilot program and AI Education Grant in partnership with Associated Builders and Contractors to support the need for AI training enabling skilled workers to focus on what they do best – building*

TOWSON, Md., April 23, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- As artificial intelligence (AI) rapidly transforms industries and becomes an essential jobsite tool for construction and industrial businesses, a new national study from DEWALT, Stanley Black & Decker's (NYSE: SWK) professional brand, reveals an emerging disconnect – the construction workforce is eager for AI, but lacks the hands-on training needed to unlock its full potential.

Experience the full interactive Multichannel News Release here:https://www.multivu.com/stanley-black-and-decker/9368251-en-dewalt-study-shows-emerging-gap-in-ai-training-and-construction-industry-needs

DEWALT's AI in the Trades study surveyed construction professionals across the globe. In the U.S., 90% of construction professionals believe AI will be indispensable within five years, yet only 8% currently use AI on the job. The primary barrier to using AI cited by professionals is a lack of formal, job-relevant training. An overwhelming 87% of respondents say AI education must be embedded in trade schools and technical programs, while 59% expressed a need for hands-on training directly tied to real construction tasks.

"Tradespeople are the backbone of our industry, and their hands-on expertise is what brings every project to life. As jobsites become increasingly complex and technology-driven, the need for practical AI training has never been more important," said Bill Beck, President, Tools & Outdoors, Stanley Black & Decker. "Our research shows that trades professionals are eager to develop and apply AI skills that will enhance their effectiveness and adaptability on the jobsite. Yet, too many still lack access to this essential training. At DEWALT, we believe that empowering our workforce with AI education is not just about keeping pace with technology - it's about equipping tradespeople with the tools and knowledge they need to solve real-world challenges, drive productivity, and lead the industry forward."

Key Findings of the DEWALT AI in the Trades Survey

1. AI is rapidly expanding on the jobsite

- 88% expect adoption to increase over the next year
- 83% say AI will be standard within three years
- 90% believe it will be indispensable within five years

2. Belief in AI's potential is meaningful, but everyday use remains limited

- 37% are piloting and researching AI
- Only 8% say AI is part of their day-to-day work currently

3. For Early Adopters, Jobsite Workflows Come First

- 46% report exploring AI in site operations and monitoring
- 46% report leveraging it in the planning and design phase of projects
- 41% are using AI to help with estimation, procurement, and supply chain processes

Training is the Missing Link in AI Adoption

While 86% of construction professionals expressed feeling somewhat or very prepared to work with AI, most cited fragmented, informal learning as a barrier. Currently, tradespeople rely heavily on self-directed resources such as YouTube (40%) and online platforms like Coursera (39%) for AI education. Video tutorials are also popular, with 42% citing them as a preferred learning method.

Among early adopters, the top benefits cited include increased productivity (35%), cost savings (34%), and improved quality control (35%).

DEWALT Leads with First-of-Its-Kind AI Training Pilot and Education for Future and Current Pros Across the US

To begin addressing the AI training gap highlighted by these findings, DEWALT is launching a pilot program with Associated Builders and Contractors Central Florida chapter's Innovation and Technology Center. The program's goal is to deliver hands-

on, jobsite-relevant AI training for the next generation of skilled trades professionals.

Ahead of National Apprenticeship Week, which is being held the week of April 27, DEWALT facilitated a case-study session for apprentices and young construction professionals enrolled in ABC Central Florida's NextGen leadership program. The session featured a senior virtual design and construction manager from a national construction firm, providing participants with real jobsite use cases and steps for apprentices and young pros to begin implementing AI immediately.

To provide access to AI education nationally, DEWALT has also committed $75,000 toABC's Trimmer Construction Education Fund toward Trimmer grants that include AI-related initiatives. ABC chapters across the United States can apply for funding to initiate AI education programs and resources in their regions.

TCEF promotes a safe, skilled and sustainable workforce by providing funding for the direct support of training initiatives/programs or the expansion of a training facility that promotes careers in the merit shop construction industry.

"Education is vital to bringing fundamental AI skillsets to our future workforce," said Matthew Abeles, ABC vice president of construction technology and innovation. "DEWALT's commitment to providing AI resources to craft professionals through its donation to the Trimmer Construction Education Fund will be invaluable to improving safety and productivity on jobsites. ABC thanks DEWALT for its generosity and dedication to lifelong learning in the construction workforce."

DEWALT is also supporting ABC's "AI Toolbox Talks" webinar, a monthly training series that equips ABC's 24,000 member companies with a roadmap to adopt AI and understand its impact on project design, robotics, and quality control.

These initiatives build on DEWALT's pledge to help close the skilled labor gap, including its commitment to invest $60 million through its Grow the Trades program by 2030 to expand access to education and resources for the trades.

"AI is starting to reshape the future of construction, and we need to make sure tradespeople are ready for it," added Beck. "These educational programs are about giving early-career workers and current pros access to the tools and skills that will matter on tomorrow's jobsites. DEWALT's goal is to help make AI practical, useful, and accessible for the people doing the work every day. We are committed to standing alongside trades professionals to ensure they have every opportunity to succeed in the evolving landscape of construction."

Click here to view the global results of DEWALT's AI in the Trades survey.

For more information on DEWALT products and solutions, visit:DEWALT.com.

Methodology
The survey was conducted online in six countries in December 2025 among skilled trade workers and decision-makers working from small, medium and large companies across residential, commercial and industrial construction.

Skilled trade respondents included carpenters, concrete workers, electricians, HVAC technicians, plumbers, drywall installers, general contractors and construction technicians. Decision-makers included professionals in business leadership, project and site leadership, design and engineering, safety and compliance, procurement, and logistics.

This report includes findings for the United States exclusively. In total, 2,481 answered the survey in the United States, including 1,730 skilled trade workers (70%) and 751 decision-makers (30%).

About DEWALT
DEWALT, a Stanley Black & Decker brand, is a leader in total jobsite solutions. For more than 100 years, DEWALT has been powering the future of construction with tools and technologies that have been designed, built and tested to help deliver safety and productivity on every jobsite. For more information, visit www.dewalt.com or follow DEWALT on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

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Founded in 1843 and headquartered in the USA, Stanley Black & Decker **(NYSE: SWK)** is a worldwide leader in Tools and Outdoor, operating manufacturing facilities globally. The Company's approximately 43,500 employees produce innovative end-user inspired power tools, hand tools, storage, digital jobsite solutions, outdoor and lifestyle products, and engineered fasteners to support the world's builders, tradespeople and DIYers. The Company's world class portfolio of trusted brands includes DEWALT®, CRAFTSMAN®, STANLEY®, BLACK+DECKER®, and Cub Cadet®. To learn more visit: www.stanleyblackanddecker.com or follow Stanley Black & Decker on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and X.

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