

Power & Hand Tools industry forecasts to 2011 & 2016

Power and hand tool demand in the US is projected to rise more than three percent annually through 2011, a deceleration from the 2001-2006 pace. Decelerating gains will reflect modest growth for home improvement expenditures and manufacturing output

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In addition, a decline in new housing starts and decelerating construction expenditure growth will dampen advances. However, these factors will be offset to some extent by a continued shift toward power tools vis-a-vis hand-operated types, especially in the consumer market -- reflecting the trend toward the purchase of more powerful, sophisticated power tools among DIYers and hobbyists. Product innovations, such as the development of higher-voltage lightweight cordless electric tools, will further spur advances.

Power tools to outpace their more durable hand tool counterparts

Power tool demand is forecast to outpace hand tool demand due to the continuing popularity of cordless electric products such as saws, sanders, polishers and grinders. Hand tool demand is limited by the inherent durability of these products. Unlike power tools, common household tools such as hammers frequently outlive their owners, dampening replacement demand. In addition, product innovation is less common than in power tools, limiting opportunities for value gains.

Cordless power tools to grow faster than corded

Cordless products will continue to post the best gains, benefitting not only from macroeconomic factors but from their performance advantages vis-a-vis plug-in models. Both professional and consumer users will continue to replace existing corded tools with cordless models due to their convenience and ease of use.

Gains will also result from the introduction of new products, especially in the power tool segment.

Consumer market to lead gains over professional uses

Professional users comprised about two-thirds of overall tool demand in 2006. Professionals use a greater variety of tools, most of which are also more expensive than those used by consumers. However, growth in consumer tool demand will outpace the professional segment, benefitting from the ongoing popularity of do-it-yourself activities and the trade-up by consumers to featureladen power tools.

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