

CONSTRUCTION ROLLFORMING SHOW PREVIEW

APRIL/MAY 2021
Vol. 4, No. 2

Rollforming

Magazine

Exclusively Devoted to Construction
Roll-Forming Professionals

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OSHA**
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Website For Construction Rollformers Only!

www.rollformingmagazine.com

■ By Sharon Thatcher

Shield Wall Media, publisher of *Rollforming Magazine* and owner of the Construction Rollforming Show, is proud to announce that a website devoted exclusively to the roll-forming industry is up and running! The launch in early May of www.rollformingmagazine.com is part of ongoing improvements we're making to bring relevant content for construction rollformers front and center.

The website has been streamlined to be clean and user-friendly on smart phones and tablets, as well as desktop computers.

We are also in the process of launching a new Rollforming Buyers' Guide. We'll be sharing more information about better functionality and more of our ongoing changes in the next issue of *Rollforming Magazine*.

I will also be in attendance at the Construction Rollforming Show in Cincinnati on June 3-4 along with most of the staff from Shield Wall Media. If you see us, please stop for a chat and give us your feedback and ideas.

INDUSTRY HONORS

Speaking of ideas, we are looking for individuals in the industry we should honor with our new Building Progress Award. We are currently taking nominations.



Anyone in the construction industry can nominate one or more candidates. The award is designed to recognize

individuals who have made significant impacts on the growth or development of the construction trade which includes significant contributors to the construction roll-forming industry: pioneers, advocates, promoters, and more.

Individuals previously awarded admission to the Metal Roofing Hall of Fame or Rural Builder Hall of Fame are still eligible for this new award.

One award will be given per year beginning in 2022. The Nomination Period for the first award closes December 31,

2021, when online and mail-in voting will commence. The nominee with the most votes will be announced at the 2022 Garage, Shed & Carport Builder Show.

Additionally, Shield Wall Media will donate \$1,000 to the 501(c)(3) charity of the recipient's choice (subject to approval).



Sharon Thatcher
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- Debut of Annual Rollforming Buyers' Guide



On The Cover

The lead installer for AA Seamless rolls half-round gutter on a job site. Related article begins on pg 62.

Photo by Sharon Thatcher

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Mill Steel Co. Acquires Prassas Metal Products

Move Expands Company's Painted and Coated Steel Business

Mill Steel Co., one of the nation's largest distributors of flat-rolled carbon steel, has purchased commercial assets of Prassas Metal Products. PMP is a Los Angeles-based steel trading and stocking distributor of pre-painted and coated coil products with a reputable 30-year track record.

Terms of the business transaction, finalized March 23, were not disclosed.

The deal is characteristic of Mill Steel, which maintains a consistent track record of double-digit growth. It strengthens its geographic footprint with additional sourcing opportunities and greater reach in the southeastern United States.

"When favorable opportunities such as this present, our aggressive acquisition strategy allows us to transact quickly to the benefit of our customers," said Mill Steel President and Chairman Pam Heglund.

Mill Steel immediately assumed steel processing and supply for PMP's broad array of construction industry customers in the southeastern, mid-south and western United States. The transition was described as "seamless" as Mill Steel promised to uphold existing contracts using its 60-plus years of steel processing expertise.

"I appreciate the smooth transition and Mill Steel's commitment to customer service," noted Prassas Metal Products CEO Jim Prassas.

In making the acquisition announcement, Mill Steel congratulated Prassas on the close of a successful 42-year steel

industry career and noted that he has taken on a consulting role with Mill Steel as the business assets are integrated.

Mill Steel Co., founded in 1959 by

Harry Samrick, is headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It operates five service center locations across the United States.

Anniversary Salute:

Beck Automation Celebrates 20th Year

Beck Automation, LLC, St. Louis, Missouri, is celebrating its 20 year anniversary.

In 2001 Joe Beck and Jeff Potthast set out to provide the best controls and service to the metal-forming industry. Since starting in their respective base-ments, Jeff and Joe have brought a company of two to almost 30 employees, and over the past 20 years have evolved Beck Automation into an industry leader.

Beck Automation designs state-of-the-art control systems, and is continually developing its Connex software that helps businesses manage, track, and streamline facilities from office to plant floor. It also manufactures controls for roll formers, cut-to-length lines, slit/cut-to-length lines, tube mills, portable roll formers, and trim shop folders. Complete retrofit projects may include engineering, custom software, panel building, and installation.



In a press release announcing the anniversary, Beck Automation noted: "Our controls and related products make production machines and the day-to-day operations more efficient and profitable ... We take pride in supplying top notch customer service."

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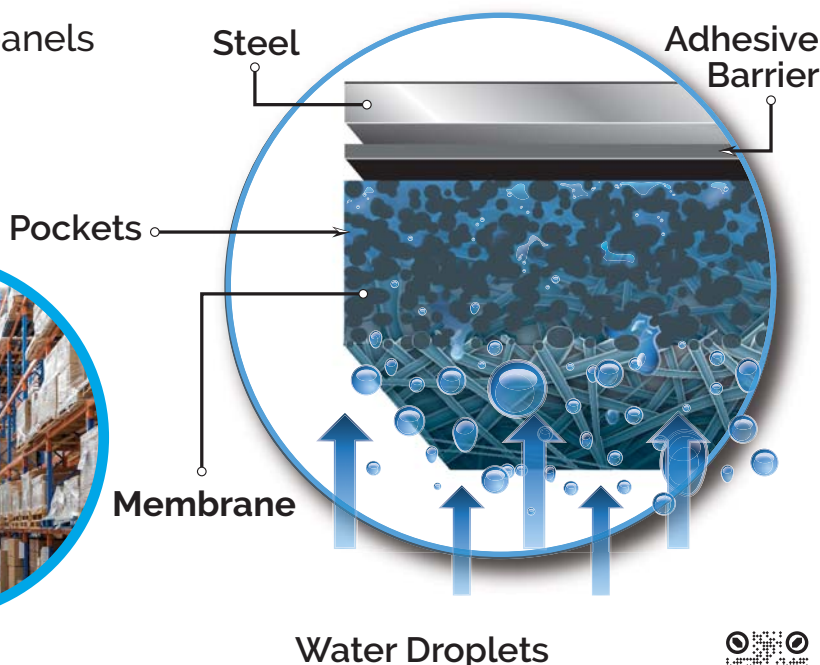
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NOT ALL LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES ARE CREATED EQUAL

Are lithium-ion batteries interchangeable with any device? No, according to the Power Tool Institute (PTI). The organization always recommends using only a lithium-ion battery made for a specific tool, by the tool's manufacturer.

"There are simply too many unknowns about third-party batteries, some of which can create great danger," PTI noted in a press release, adding: "Reputable original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) have their products listed with an independent certification lab such as UL or Canadian Standards Association (CSA) to evaluate products for compliance with internationally accepted safety standards. This listing process is mandatory for power tools used in work environments governed by OSHA. The introduction of a third-party battery to the tool system negates this effort to document performance and safety compliance because cordless power tools and their batteries are tested as complete systems.

"This total testing protocol — comprising a dedicated combination of tools, battery, and charger — helps ensure each component part communicates properly with the others in order to monitor and control critical functions. Only the tool manufacturer is able to obtain this "system" certification. Each manufacturer uses its own proprietary control circuitry, which is not available to third-party component suppliers.

"Some knock-off batteries may be listed to a general battery safety standard, but many are not tested or listed to any safety standard at all. A lithium-ion battery that is not intentionally designed to work properly with a specific tool and charger system can result in poor performance and shorter life, damage to the tool and charger, or, even worse, a battery bursting that may cause a fire or explosion."

Source: www.powertoolinstitute.com

In Memoriam

Remembering Chris Ray November 15, 1960 – February 18, 2021

Chris Ray was the National Sales Manager at Levi's Building Components since 2014. In his position he helped the company grow tremendously, leading the sales team to exceed expectations year over year. More than that, Chris was an incredible person. He was genuine, humble and patient. To those under his management, he was the kind of boss for who it was easy to grow fond of. His down-to-earth attitude didn't just make him highly approachable, but a great person to simply sit and talk with about anything from music, to travel or great restaurants. Chris was also an incredibly creative person, with loads of ideas and big hopes for what could be accomplished if we work together.



The memories of Chris will be an inspiration for many. Here are some memories from a few who had the privilege to work beside him.

"Chris Ray was an incredible boss. I started my career with Levi's at the beginning of Covid shutdowns last March. Chris went out of his way to make sure I was given every opportunity for success. Chris was knowledgeable and caring. He was hands down the best boss I have ever had, our entire Sales team would agree. We were blessed to have been given the time with him that we were, and he will be greatly missed." – Shannon Zimmerman, Inside Sales Agent

"Truly a renaissance man of our time. Chris was able to bring some unique characteristics to his style of leadership. He was well versed, very bright and able to communicate his ideas effectively to anyone. Chris was a hard working guy, a great sales manager and instrumental in Levi's becoming a successful business. Chris loved his family and spoke often about how proud he was of all of them. He loved life and looked forward to new friendships and experiences. Everyone who knew him will miss him dearly." – Ed Machowski, Senior Technical Sales Agent

Chris was a real great guy to be around. He was full of life, a real gentleman. I am not sure I ever got to go through the door behind him. He was always holding the door open for people. Some of the great phrases he used. "It takes all of us together, it takes a village to get the job done." Another one was: "Today is a gift. Let's make the best of it." He has left us big shoes to fill. – Steve Fisher, President and CEO

At the request of the family, if anyone would like to give in memory of Chris Ray, please do so by making a donation to the American Cancer Society.



THE DM-ARM HAS YOUR BACK!

Drexel Metals Association of Regional Manufacturers (DM-ARM) is a comprehensive portable roll former program designed to help you meet building codes and build your brand locally. The Drexel Metals DM-ARM program allows installers and regional manufacturers to grow their businesses by offering better local control, greater profits, freight savings, less scrap, and the ability to provide metal roofing on-demand.

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Fierce Forecasts Add To Supply Chain Challenge

With supply chains already strained by Covid disruptions, the Metal Roofing Alliance (MRA) says that contractors and roofing installers are increasingly uneasy about the upcoming extreme storm, hurricane and wildfire season.

"We're hearing growing concerns from installers and contractors in places like Colorado, and other areas where spring hailstorms are beginning, as well as those from the Gulf states where hurricane season is right around the corner. In the west, another threatening wildfire season also is coinciding with the squeeze for skilled labor and material shortages of some building products. Taken together, these factors could be disastrous when it comes to meeting the significant potential demand from homeowners needing roof replacements and repairs this year," said Renee Ramey, MRA Executive Director.

While no company, roofing or building industry segment is immune to these disruptions, Ramey said it does offer opportunities for suggesting metal roofing alternatives to customers who may only be considering asphalt, especially now that new steel mills are coming on line.

"... the fact is, there are other solutions [than asphalt] that actually may be better suited to homeowners' needs and the region where they live, and can open up the potential for contractors and installers to grow their business over the long run as well as help take the pressure off short term supply issues," said Ramey.

Selling metal, however, takes some

finesse. First, if you are facing customers who want product quicker or at a better price than what is logical to offer, beware of using an unknown supplier.

"Using inferior products will result in expensive call-backs, unhappy customers, a damaged reputation and worse," said

Ramey. "Set expectations with customers and help them to understand that waiting and paying a little more for a quality product they can rely on for decades to come is much better than the costs and headaches of using an inferior product that may fail after just a few years."

MCA PUBLISHES NEW WHITE PAPER

The Metal Construction Association (MCA) has published a new white paper available for free download on its website, www.metalconstruction.org. The paper, "Material Properties that Affect Steel Cladding Performance," details important material parameters that affect the performance and qualities of steel cladding and the ability to fabricate the steel, paying particular attention to the often-misunderstood concept of gauge.

Steel cladding is often a key element in the overall building design. But not all steel cladding systems are made or perform the same. Steel used in roof and wall applications is the product of a highly engineered process. A variety of factors, including the metal thickness, yield strength, metal coatings and finish systems determine the performance of a cladding system. This paper provides recommendations on what cladding would perform best based on building specifications including location and purpose.

Sections include Carbon Content, Yield and Tensile Strength, Steel Designations, Coating Systems, and Steel Thickness/Gauge. Gauge is a particularly

important discussion because thickness is a critical parameter in the performance of steel sheet and coil. Charts, examples and tables provide results of rigorous testing to meet performance requirements for the thickness used.

METAL BUILDINGS INSTITUTE RECEIVES KETENBRINK FOUNDATION GRANT

The Metal Buildings Institute (MBI) has been awarded a grant from the Ketenbrink Education Foundation (KEF). Funds will be used to update and refresh the MBI's signature Quality and Craftsmanship Video series. The fee-based videos were created for use in the training and development of metal building assemblers and debuted in 2001.

The KEF is the legacy of Bob and Bev Ketenbrink. Bob was instrumental in the development of the training series.

Its stated goal is to assist in improving the quality of metal building construction and the training available in the metal building industry. According to Tim Seyler, president of MBI, the series has been used to train thousands of young erectors and is the only training program of its kind developed by erectors for erectors.

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Construction Input Prices Rise in March

Construction input prices rose 3.5% in March, according to an Associated Builders and Contractors analysis of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Producer Price Index data. Nonresidential construction input prices also increased 3.5% for the month.

Construction input prices are 12.9% higher than a year ago in March 2020, and non-residential construction input prices are up 12.4% during that same time span.

ABC's Chief Economist Anirban Basu said he expects material prices to continue to rise but at a less aggressive pace as the pandemic fades. "That will help moderate price increases at some point, though in the very near term, contractors should anticipate additional cost escalations," he said. "With the global economy reawakening from its slumber, demand for key inputs is expanding. Meanwhile, supply continues to be constrained by many factors, including ongoing concerns regarding worker health, trade disputes, shifting global supply chains and political actions.

The International Monetary Fund indicates that the worldwide economy is poised for its fastest expansion ever measured, based on records dating back to 1980.

Producer Price Index, March 2021		
	1-Month % Change	12-Month % Change
Inputs to Construction	3.5%	12.9%
Inputs to Nonresidential Construction	3.5%	12.4%
Plumbing Fixtures and Fittings	1.0%	1.9%
Fabricated Structural Metal Products	3.2%	9.4%
Iron and Steel	13.5%	37.5%
Steel Mill Products	17.6%	40.1%
Nonferrous Wire and Cable	3.8%	19.1%
Softwood Lumber	6.8%	83.4%
Concrete Products	0.2%	1.5%
Prepared Asphalt, Tar Roofing & Siding Products	2.5%	4.3%
Crude Petroleum	11.0%	90.6%
Natural Gas	46.6%	178.3%
Unprocessed Energy Materials	22.3%	96.7%
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics		

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR METALCON TOP PRODUCTS AWARD

2021 METALCON exhibitors are invited to nominate top metal products in 15 categories for its Top Products Award. A product must have been introduced to the market no sooner than Jan. 1, 2019, and its manufacturer must be a 2021 METALCON exhibiting company. Exhibitors are eligible to nominate more than one top product but not more than one product per category.

A simple Top Products Award application is available at www.metalcon.com under the Exhibit tab. Submissions are due July 1.

Winners will be determined by an electronic vote. Award winners will be announced on Sept. 7, and exhibitors will be invited to showcase their top products with special product recognition at their booths in Tampa, Oct. 6-8. Voting and special recognition for a People's Choice Top Three award will take place on the show floor.

HOUSING STARTS INCREASE SUBSTANTIALLY IN 3 OF 4 REGIONS

Statistics are revealing what most rollformers already knew: the housing market is booming. The SBCA, summarizing U.S. Labor Department statistics for March, shows a month-over-month increase in housing starts of 19.4% overall. Single-family starts increased 15.3% and multi-family increased 30.8%. Total U.S. permits, an indicator of future construction, increased 2.7%.

Starts rose in three regions and dropped in one:

- Northeast (+64% for March; +133.3% for the year)
- Midwest (+122.8% for March; +96.8% for the year)
- South (+13.5% for March; +21.6% for the year)
- West (-13.6% for March; +16.9% for the year)

For the full report visit <https://www.sbcmag.info/content/sbc-housing-starts-report>. **RF**

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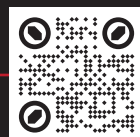
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Dealing with OSHA

More Inspections, Greater Citations Ahead

■ By Phillip M. Perry

The Biden administration is issuing new OSHA regulations and stepping up enforcement in a move to ensure workplace safety. In response, businesses are retooling operations and sanitation procedures to protect personnel from accidents and Covid infections. A recent OSHA advisory describes steps to reduce the risk of violations.

Rollformers trying to avoid costly OSHA citations are facing new challenges in the form of heightened enforcement activity and greater liability for workplace Covid infections. As federal, state and local governments tighten regulations, more operators in the metal construction trade may find themselves retooling their shops to ensure compliance with stricter mandates.

“I think you’re going to see much more aggressive OSHA enforcement under the Biden administration,” says former OSHA head Edwin G. Foulke, Jr., now a partner in the Atlanta office of Fisher & Phillips (fisherphillips.com). He views a January presidential executive order, “Protecting Worker Health and Safety,” and new OSHA guidelines issued in March as leading indicators of a more robust regulatory fervor. The agency is widely expected to issue new workplace regulations under a so-called “emergency temporary standard” this year.

The new federal posture may also include a larger OSHA oversight staff. “The Biden administration says it wants to double the number of inspectors,” says William K. Principe, partner in the Atlanta office of Constangy, Brooks, Smith & Prophete (constangy.com). “While we don’t know if they will hire



New OSHA regulations, and the hiring of additional inspectors, are expected to come soon.

that many, it’s reasonable to assume there will be some increase. During the last administration vacancies weren’t always filled, so OSHA ended up being below the number of federal inspectors that had existed for a very long time.”

More inspectors mean more boots on the ground. OSHA observers expect an increase in the rate of inspections, along with more citations and higher penalties. And all this comes at a time when Covid is raising troublesome issues of its own. “The pandemic, with its greater safety requirements, has increased the risk of OSHA violations,” says Gary Heppner, a California-based independent OSHA safety advisor (riskmanagementaudits.com). He added that inspectors will be

looking closely at how businesses are spacing personnel, mandating masks and cleaning the work environment.

CONSTRUCTION TARGETED

OSHA is expected to pay increasing attention to building sites. “Construction falls are among the most frequent causes of workplace injuries or fatalities,” says Mark D. Norton, Director of Norton Safety Services, Tucson, AZ. “Because of that, OSHA tends to focus inspection activity on that area.”

Observers cite an influx of new workers as a key reason for the spike in accidents. “In the economic downturn of 2007 and 2008, many employees left the construction industry,” says Norton.



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“When the economy rebounded, people were hired without the same level of experience and knowledge. Less trained workers and an increasing demand for construction is a recipe for more accidents.”

OSHA is also taking greater interest in machine shops, another environment with high accident rates, according to Heppner. Here Covid is having an effect: Workers, long required to wear safety glasses while operating certain equipment are now expected to use face shields and maintain appropriate distances from others. That can be difficult in restricted environments where people are working in close quarters. Any resulting laxity in safety considerations can spark illnesses and OSHA citations. While rollformers in rural areas might not be subject to the same degree of scrutiny as urban operators, they still face the risk of employee complaints being filed with OSHA.

OSHA MANDATES

Most employers want their workers to be safe and healthy. And given the higher OSHA profile, businesses will be making a special effort to meet state and federal standards. That means conforming to the “General Duty Clause” of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, requiring workplaces “free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees.”

While the imprecise nature of the general duty clause allows leeway for employers to account for varying local conditions, it also leaves plenty of room for inspectors to find unexpected violations. The lack of specific guidelines prompted OSHA to issue a comprehensive guidance document earlier this year. “Protecting Workers: Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Workplace” lists steps employers can take to reduce potential spread. (Businesses can access the document at [osha.gov/coronavirus](https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus)).

Although the new guidelines are advisory in nature, OSHA observers expect specific regulations soon. “OSHA will likely issue an emergency temporary standard for workplaces,” says Foulke. This standard will carry the force of law and employers will be fined for non-compliance with its terms.

How strict will the regulations be? That is still to be seen. “The emergency temporary standard is not expected to be as employer averse as the OSHA regulations in California, but will likely resemble the Virginia standard, which follows CDC guidance,” says Foulke. Employers will likely be required to conduct workplace risk assessments and maintain written Covid-related action plans to include social distancing, masks, sanitation and training.

“One thing I think you’re going to see during the Biden administration is a focus on musculoskeletal disorders (ergonomics, repetitive motions, lifting) and combustible dust,” adds Foulke. “Also, I think sometime this year OSHA will go back to

Determine Your OSHA Readiness

How well have you secured your machine shop against the risk of accidents and Covid infections? Find out by taking this quiz. Score 10 points for each step taken. Then total your score and check your rating at the bottom of the chart.

1. Conducted a workplace risk assessment
2. Implemented measures to control risks
3. Developed a written accident and infection prevention plan
4. Assigned a Covid-19 mitigation plan coordinator
5. Trained employees on the plan and on preventive measures
6. Enforced the use of face coverings
7. Implemented temperatures/symptoms screening
8. Implemented cleaning protocols
9. Coordinated use of breaks and lunchrooms
10. Ensured the enforcement of sick leave policies

What’s your score? 80 or more: Congratulations. You have gone a long way toward making your business environment safer for your employees. Between 60 and 80: It’s time to fine tune your prevention procedures. Below 60: Your business is at risk. Take action on the suggestions in the accompanying story.

Source: Constangy, Brooks, Smith & Prophete.

requiring that 250-plus employers in certain industries file not only 300A Summaries but also the 300 logs and the First Report of Injury forms.”

Employer organizations will likely litigate onerous OSHA rules. “Trade associations have been successful in the past in getting injunctions against OSHA regulations deemed outside the agency’s jurisdiction or overly burdensome,” notes Douglas E. Witte, who represents businesses in labor and employment law matters at Madison, Wisc.-based Boardman & Clark (boardmanclark.com). “Sometimes the regulations are modified, or simply delayed for a year or longer.”

WORK-RELATED ILLNESS

If an employee comes down with Covid and misses work time or goes to the hospital, is the illness recordable as work related? The answer is often less than clear. “Up until now, OSHA has not been pushing too hard on employers who claim COVID-19 infections occurred outside the workplace,” says Witte. Employers have been operating under fairly liberal standards, thanks to OSHA guidance issued in the spring of 2020 that allowed Covid illnesses to be categorized as not work related if an “alternative explanation” could account for the infections.



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Unfortunately, the term “alternative explanation” is vague, and OSHA does not provide examples. “The guidance is being interpreted, by some, as indicating that if the employer can point to some exposure away from the workplace, then the case can be deemed not work-related,” says Principe. Others are even taking the position that because Covid is

being spread everywhere an infection is not work-related unless the employee has continually commuted in their own car, stayed in their own house, and not gone to a grocery store or interacted with the public in any way.

That kind of liberal interpretation, though, skirts the edge of justice. “I think you need more concrete evidence that

the employee was exposed to an infected person away from work,” cautions Principe. “Perhaps their spouse, children, or people they socialized with have Covid, or perhaps they attended a super-spreader event.” Faulty categorizations can be costly. “OSHA issues citations to employers who fail to properly record or report cases,” says Principe. “The agency is often tipped off by whistle blowers, or they get word of infections through hospitals or public health departments.” Penalties for serious violations start at \$13,653, although the amount is sometimes reduced in the event of a good-faith history. Citations for willful or repeated issues start at \$136,532.

Certainly, there is no need to record cases that are clearly not work-related. While an employer may do so out of fear of a citation, being too inclusive can backfire. “Over-reporting can spark an OSHA inspection when the entries from an employer’s logs are entered on their 300A Summaries,” says Foulke. “Those are available for review not only to OSHA but also to plaintiff’s lawyers and community activists like Common Cause. Skewed numbers can impact a business’s ability to get future work from clients.”

So how about those cases that fall into a grey area? “My advice to employers would be that in the case of doubt, record or report the event,” says Principe. “You can always explain the facts, saying that you don’t believe it is work-related for the following reasons, but that you are including the case out of an abundance of caution. This will protect you from a citation.”

Many OSHA observers believe the Biden administration will tighten criteria, determining that more infections occurred in the business environment. There may be a return to earlier CDC guidance which mandated that an illness be designated work related if the employee had been within six feet of another Covid-infected worker for a total of at least 15 minutes. “The agency may start tracking infections down to employer facilities if they can do so and support the change by claiming they are trying to halt the spread of Covid,” says Principe.

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ROLLFORMING • APRIL/MAY 2021

Controlling the OSHA Inspection

While OSHA has the right to conduct inspections of business premises, rollformers need to know and exert their own rights. "Just because a person has a government badge, that doesn't mean they get to do whatever they want," says former OSHA head Edwin G. Foulke, Jr., now a partner in the Atlanta office of Fisher & Phillips (fisherphillips.com).

During an opening conference with inspectors, Foulke suggests employers set out guidelines such as the following:

At least one management person needs to be present when OSHA inspectors visit the work site.

One other management-level person must be present when OSHA inspectors interview any supervisor or manager.

The employer must be allowed to bring in their own industrial hygienist, as well as be present if OSHA does any kind of monitoring of air or noise.

During their inspections, OSHA representatives will look for the following evidence of violations:

- There was a hazardous condition
- The hazard was recognized
- The hazard was causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm
- There was a feasible method to correct the hazard.

Finally, businesses should treat OSHA inspectors with respect while not offering more data than the law requires. "Some employers think that if they tell OSHA everything they know and they give every document they have, that somehow that's going to make things better," says Foulke. "It never does."

FINDING HELP

While the prospect of an OSHA inspection and citations can disturb any metal fabricator, the federal agency can also be helpful. "Many businesses believe that every interaction with OSHA is negative," says Norton. "They don't realize that OSHA also provides consultative services at both the federal and state level."

At the employer's request, says Norton, OSHA will inspect the machine shop for problem areas. While there is no charge for the service, the employer has to agree to fix whatever OSHA finds. "It's all confidential, so nothing uncovered by the inspectors gets shared with the compliance side."

That proactive approach can prevent costly citations down the road. "It's very important to take the right steps to reduce the risk of infection in the workplace," says Principe. "This will keep employees from getting sick and the employer out of trouble. I encourage businesses to track the OSHA and CDC websites on a regular basis. Know what the recommendations are. Then if OSHA shows up at the door everything will be in order." RF



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The Pros and Cons of Buying a New vs Used Roll Former

■ By Sharon Thatcher

Buying a new roll former is not a cheap investment, but buying a used machine can be equally expensive if you don't get a good one. Old versus New, it's a decision that can keep you up at night, but there are ways to objectively weigh your options.

Bill Griffin, an owner and partner of Metal Rollforming Systems (MRS), offers some pros and cons of each.

BUYING NEW

"Obviously there are some advantages with a new machine," Griffin noted. "With a new machine you're going to get

the factory warranty, factory support, and the factory technician coming out to your site," he said.

By contrast, with a used machine, you probably won't get a warranty. "Depending on the manufacturer you may or may not get tech support," he said, adding: "You want to make sure you can still get the components, still get the support before you buy a used machine."

Buying new, you will also have the opportunity to inspect everything and to have your profile configured exactly how you want it. "Everything is built for your application." With a used machine "you might be trying to make something fit your application that's not necessary with what you need," he cautioned.

Another plus is the new machine's ability to work well — at maximum efficiency — with components that were designed specific to that machine. "When you get an uncoiler, a shear, a roll former and control, all new, they're all designed to run at the same speed, communicate with each other and to integrate with each other," Griffin said. "Not necessarily will that be the same case with used equipment: you might find an uncoiler from one vendor, and a roll former from another vendor, and the controls from a third vendor." Integrating them could prove challenging.

Another advantage to a new roll former is the ease in going from one deck to two as your business grows. "If you get a single deck with the intent to add to your other profiles for versatility, all that can be spec'd into a new machine, whereas the used machine, it is what it is," Griffin said. Adding a deck may not be an option.

Also with a new machine, you get the latest in die technology that can handle the varying grades of steel that run through your machine. "What you're seeing right now in the coil industry ... with grade 80, there's a lot of recycled material. There's not a lot of virgin raw steel produced anymore. So that's driving the carbon content up ... the steel is getting harder," Griffin noted. Older tooling may not be able to handle that harder steel, resulting in improper bends in the panel.



Comprehensive warranties and upgraded technology are obvious advantages for buying new.

But the biggest drawback to a new machine is the expense (\$200,000 and up) and the wait time for production (from weeks to months).

Tantalizing is the lower cost of a used machine, and many roll-forming businesses do well with used machines. Proper inspections and a lifecycle cost analysis can help you decide if a used roll former is a wise decision or not.

BUYING USED

A quick note that finding a good used roll former these days is not easy. The roll-forming industry is growing, and the good machines go fast. Buyer beware cannot be emphasized enough.

"When you buy used equipment, the reason you want to buy it is to save money," Griffin said. "That's the whole reason, the whole crust to buying used. You're buying used to save money and



Know how to evaluate used equipment prior to purchase.

possibly to expedite [arrival], so you can have it online sooner." It's still a major purchase, so make sure to get your money's worth.

Griffin said inspection prior to the purchase is key and should include inspecting for value, life expectancy, condition, and lifecycle cost. He offers

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COST ANALYSIS OF BUYING NEW VS OLD

Even if you are a good mechanic and love working on machines, remember that only a good, running machine makes money. You might save money working on your own machine and gather invaluable experience that will help you maintain it, but bottom line, know at what financial point your decision to buy used counterbalances the rewards.

In addition to the cost of the machine, you will need to factor in the following possible expenses for a used roll former:

RIGGING COST

Estimated expense: \$0-2,500

“Let’s assume the price of new machine is \$200,000,” Griffin started. “When you purchase a new machine, loading it onto the truck is typically included. That’s not always the case with a used machine. Sometimes the person selling the machine doesn’t have the capacity to load it onto a truck. They might have to hire a rigging company. And those costs can add up.”

FREIGHT

Estimated expense: \$5,000

Once loaded, the machine needs to travel to its destination. “Maybe you’re picking it up nearby. But in most cases, when someone is selling a used line they don’t want it in their backyard. It’s not going to be in the same state. They’re going to try to sell it a few states away so they’re not going into competition with you,” Griffin explained.

TECH ASSISTANCE FOR SETUP

Estimated expense \$5,000 to \$15,000

“When you buy new, you’re typically going to attach the installation and tech expense into it. When you buy used, if you want a factory tech, it depends on how much work you need on the machine. If you just want one of the manufacturers to come out to inspect it, you might be on the low end, but maybe you want some service work done, or you want the tech to tear it down and prepare it for the rigging company, and then come out to set it up for you.”

REPAIR OR RETOOLING AS NEEDED

Estimated expense: \$0-\$50,000

“Depending on the condition and the evaluation, especially if you can’t see it under power, you’re going to budget into that higher figure because you might need valves, you might need drives or other components,” Griffin noted, adding, “You can see on the low end, we’re still doing pretty good. On the high end, it’s sometimes even more. That’s where the critical analysis of looking at the machine and determining the condition comes in.”

At the end of the day, when you add up all your expected expenses, does it make financial sense to buy new or buy used? It’s up to you to make that final determination, and you can only do that by knowing as much as you can before you commit to a purchase.

these pointers:

1. Evaluate first what’s included in your purchase. “If you’re going to get a used roll former, and you have to go out and buy an uncoiler, a shear, or other pieces to complete this equipment, odds are that costs are going to increase quickly,” he said. “So you have this used piece of equipment, now you’ve got to adapt a shear for it, or add control systems for it; it all takes labor in the field — which is expensive. It takes customizing — that takes time and money.

If you are getting additional equipment, where did it come from? “If you get an uncoiler, you also want to look at the shear, the coil cart, the in-feed table, and the roll-former controls. Is this all included as one operational package or is this just a collection of stuff somebody’s had sitting over in a corner?” Griffin asks.

2. Evaluate the condition of the machine. Take the time to go over the machine carefully.

“Like buying any used piece of equipment, there’s bearings, power transmission components, electronics, hydraulics, all sorts of things to inspect,” he said. “You can be wading into some murky waters.

“You want to know if this machine is going to last,” he continued. “Is this machine going to service you well? Is it going to accomplish what you want?”

Seeing the machine under power prior to purchase is one of the best ways to evaluate its condition. “Anytime a machine is not under power, I always suggest to the customer that you take that machine at a discount. Unless you can see that machine run with your own eyes, you don’t know what it’s going to do,” Griffin said.

By seeing it run under power you can assess its performance. “Do the components function the way they should? Does the coil reel run — does it turn on? Does the shear function — does it run proper and consistent lengths? All that will tell you what type of condition it’s in electrically and mechanically. You’re

looking for those key indicators to tell you if this line is going to work when you bring it [into your line] and under power,” he emphasized.

Only under power can you inspect the tooling, the links, and the condition of panels running off the line.

“The most critical part of a roll former is its tooling,” Griffin said. “There’s a lot of costs in the tooling and the tooling makes the product that you’re going to sell. So if you’re tooling is worn or damaged, then the product you’re going to try to sell is not going to be competitive in the market.”

In your evaluation, you’re going to want to see how the profiles match top and bottom. “Are there wear points in the radiuses? Are there dies scratched, or is the chrome worn off?”

If the dies touch, they will pit and

There’s a lot of recycled material. There’s not a lot of virgin raw steel produced anymore. So that’s driving the carbon content up ... the steel is getting harder. Older tooling may not be able to handle that harder steel, resulting in improper bends in the panel.

damage themselves with the contact of two hard surfaces coming together. The result: “You can see where [the tooling is]

pitted, it’s rough, rusted, that’s caused by the dies contacting themselves,” Griffin described. “An operator can misadjust it, bring the top deck down and touch the bottom shafts, and that can really hurt a set of tooling. It starts scratching paint, and you have all sorts of issues. So really pay attention to the condition of your tooling.”

Why is tooling so important? “If you’ve got to replace tooling, you’re going to have a minimum cost of \$30,000-40,000 to replace the tooling, and up to over \$100,000 if we have to do shafts and dies, with labor included,” he said.

Inspect the panels after they run through the roll former. Panels should lie flat. If not, it’s indicative of one of two things: either damage to the dies, or a misadjusted machine. “If it’s a machine adjustment, that’s simple,” he said. But

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know before you buy if it's a simple adjustment or a major fix.

Another thing to look for in the panel is coverage consistency. Griffin offers this example: "If your panel is 36 inches overall, 9 inches between the ribs ... is the front of the sheet different from the back of the sheet? If it's wide or narrow the machine may need shim work; does it need adjustment? And what about the overlap? Does it seal well? When you take the two sheets, put them over each other, checking that lap, is that lap good ... is this panel good, can I sell this panel, or do I need to work on it?"

You want to know the root cause of any inconsistency.

3. Can You Still Get Parts and Support Services? Before you buy that used machine — knowing you may need to work out some kinks — contact the man-

Finding a good used roll former these days is not easy. The roll-forming industry is growing, and the good machines go fast. Buyer beware.

ufacturer of that machine. "Now you're going to know if the support is still available," Griffin said. "Say, 'hey I'm looking at buying this machine, here's the serial number, here's the tooling number, what can you tell me about this?' And they're going to look in their records and say, 'I can't support this or I can support this, and this is how much it would cost to retool it.'"

For roll formers built by companies

still in business, you may be able to find parts and most likely get some service questions answered. This particularly holds true for machines that have been reconditioned and sold by the original manufacturer, but, Griffin warned, "some older roll formers — maybe somebody's home-built project — can be hard to get parts for. You're going to be on your own when it comes to supporting that piece of equipment."

And, is the manufacturer still in business? "There's a lot of value in tech support," Griffin said. "There's a good chance at some point you're going to have to call tech support, even if it's just basic support." He said MRS tries to help owners of its machines no matter where they were purchased. "We'd still offer that [support], many other companies would still offer that, as long as they're still in business." RF



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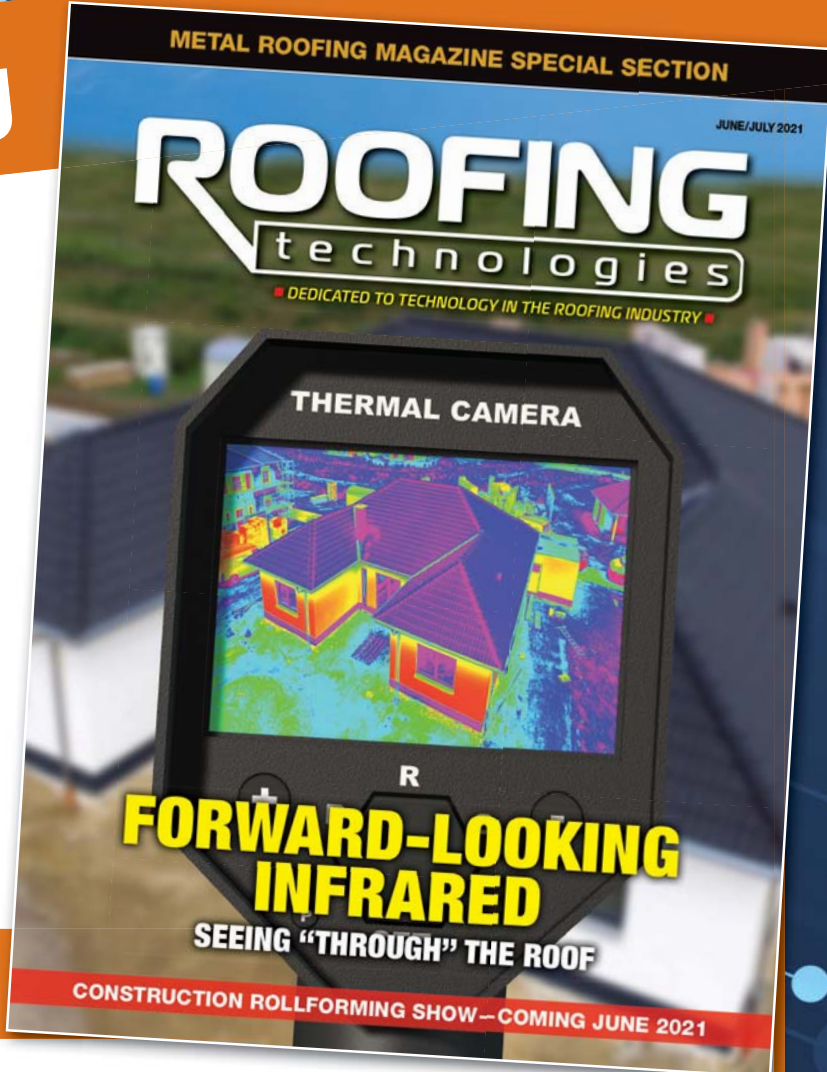
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Coil Purchasing Strategies

Buying bare-to-paint vs precoated coil

How you buy steel coil is one of the most significant ongoing financial decisions you make in the business of roll forming. Cole Wolford, in the Coil Division of Graber Post Buildings, says part of the buying equation deals with the pros and cons of buying bare metal then sending it as needed to a coil coater vs. pre-painted. In a recent interview, as a prelude to his upcoming educational session, “Coil Purchasing Strategies” at the June 2-3 Construction Rollforming Show, he provided some insight into why some rollformers choose one over the other.

THE PROS OF BARE-TO-PAINT

Today, buying pre-painted has become the norm, yet Wolford noted that a lot of bare metal is still being purchased. At one time, it was common because offshore bare steel was cheaper even with subsequent coating factored in, and it was rationalized that if there was a quality issue it would be caught by the domestic coil coater.

“There’s been kind of an old theory in our industry that if you are buying bare-to-paint — specifically offshore bare-to-paint — it’s better to have a second set of eyes on that coil before it shows up at your place,” he said. “In the past, say I buy a substrate offshore and bring it into the U.S. and get it painted, somebody is seeing that bare coil as it runs down the line. If there is an issue with the substrate (that might get hidden by the paint) the coating line is going to shut that down for me and they’re going to alert me and say

‘you don’t want to keep putting paint on that coil because it’s going to cause problems.’”

Consequently, you still had the advantages of cheaper steel, but with the benefits of some quality control.

“That was a theory used at one time and there’s enough people in the industry that have been around long enough to still subscribe to that theory,” Wolford added.

Another advantage to bare-to-paint coil is the freedom to switch colors on the fly.

“If you go and buy pre-painted coil stock, you have already committed [to certain colors]. Let’s say you’re going to buy 500 tons of pre-painted this month ... you’ve committed all 500 tons to those colors. Next thing you know you have a run on [a different color] and you don’t have anything for that because that’s not what you bought.”

It is more likely that you will be able to get the color you need quicker via bare-to-paint. The turnaround time is shorter because you already have the coil in your inventory, whereas, if your typical pre-painted provider doesn’t have the color you need in stock (which is more of a problem in tight-market situations such as being experienced today) your order may wait in line for a couple of months or more while it is being made and delivered.

THE PROS OF PRE-PAINTED

Pre-painted coil, however, has gained in popularity for its own obvious rea-



sons: when it’s in stock, there’s no extra preparations needed and no extra shipping expenses getting it to and from the coil coater location. “If I buy bare-to-paint somewhere I’ve got to get it to that coating line to get the paint put on it,” Wolford explained. With pre-painted coil, “it’s a little more cost effective because you don’t have all the freight.”

An additional benefit to pre-painted coil deals with waste during the coating process.

“When you paint coil there’s always going to be coil loss,” Wolford said. “There’s a head and a tail on that coil and there’s going to be some of it that’s not going to be a good, finished product by the time it gets through the coating line. They’ll crop it out and give you a scrap credit for it, but if you bought, let’s say 100,000 pounds of bare-to-paint from the steel mill, well, you’ve paid them for the 100,000 pounds. Then by time it’s all coated, painted, and shows up at your shop, maybe you only get 98,000 pounds, yet you’ve paid, on the steel side, for 100,000 pounds.”

Tips From the Pros))

For pre-painted coil, the scrap loss is already factored into the equation; “you don’t have to look at it, you don’t see it,” Wolford said. “Once they ship it, you pay for what’s on the truck when it shows up at your place.”

THE WINNER?

So what is better — bare-to-paint or pre-painted? Wolford said there is no right or wrong answer.

Graber Post primarily uses and sells pre-painted metal, but keeps some bare metal around for just-in-case situations. “Maybe we mis-figured our calculations, or maybe the mill delivered a little less than what we ordered and all of a sudden we realize we need three more truckloads of, say charcoal coil,” he said. “Well if we have our bare-to-paint at a coating location, we can put in an order and get some charcoal.” RF

More coil purchasing strategies

To buy steel effectively you are better prepared if you know something about it: what are its chemical qualities; what is tensile strength; what are the common types of steel and their uses? Cole Wolford, Graber Post Buildings, will be addressing those issues and more in his educational session at the Construction Rollforming Show. His presentation, Coil Purchasing Strategies, is scheduled for Thursday, June 2, 3:00 p.m.

Wolford will expound further on the bare metal vs. pre-painted topic at his CRS workshop, along with additional tips on the following:

- Understanding substrates: Galvalume (AZ55, AZ50, AZ35); Galvanized (G-100, G-60, G-40) and Specialty (Zinc, Aluminum, Magnesium mixtures)
- Understanding tensile strength, Grade 80 and Grade 50
- Understanding thickness (why you don’t order by gauge)
- Understanding paint systems (polyester, SMP, PVDF)
- Understanding substrate and paint warranties
- Purchasing strategies (developing partnerships)
- Freight (cost-effective freight options)
- Pricing (managing things you can’t control)

See more educational sessions scheduled for the show on page 36.

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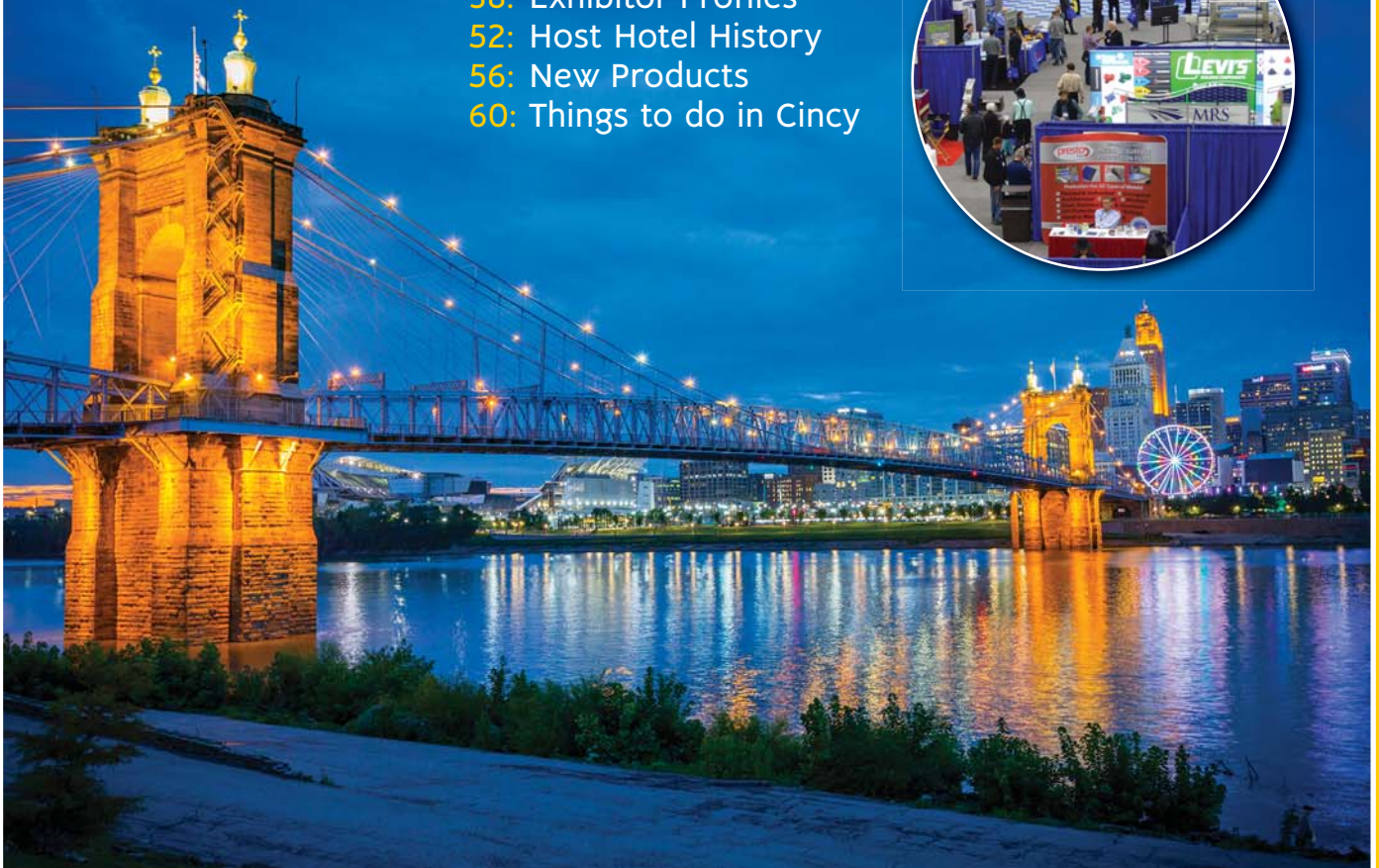


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2021 Construction Rollforming Show PREVIEW

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TOP 10 Reasons to Attend the Construction Rollforming Show

■ By Chris Cox, JD

Trade shows are back! COVID-19 restrictions shut down trade shows for over a year while people quarantined and socially distanced. Now, as America's economy "reopens," trade shows will once again provide invaluable resources to businesses to gain competitive advantages. The following are the **TOP 10 REASONS** why business owners, managers, and key team members should attend the 2021 Construction Rollforming Show in Cincinnati, Ohio:

1 Gain knowledge of industry trends and forecasts. Trade show attendees learn from experts and peers about what is happening in their industry and what is expected to happen in the next 12 to 24 months. For example, what is the current availability of steel and when is the steel supply expected to improve? How will COVID-19 affect the roll-forming industry in the second half of 2021 and beyond?

2 Gain knowledge of legal, regulatory, and compliance changes. A new administration in the White House will undoubtedly result in new laws and regulations. How will these changes affect your business and what steps can businesses take to succeed?

3 Gain knowledge of new products and services. Manufacturers are constantly developing new products and features that help their customers improve productivity and efficiency. Trade show attendees learn about the latest products and features that can give them a competitive advantage.

4 Gain knowledge of how other businesses operate. Trade show attendees meet their colleagues and discuss how their businesses operate and what challenges they are facing. By doing so, attendees learn how other businesses improved efficiency and solved problems. Attendees can use this information to improve their own efficiency and solve problems.

5 Gain knowledge about your competition. The roll-forming industry is constantly changing. Attendees can learn what their competition is doing. Who bought new equipment? Who opened a new location? Who went out of business?

6 Build relationships with key vendors. Vendors can be valuable partners. Trade show attendees get face-to-face time with multiple key vendors and establish relationships that will help their business succeed.

7 Build relationships with colleagues in the industry. Getting to know colleagues in the roll-forming industry is a great reason to attend a trade show. Attendees can meet their colleagues from other regions and have a resource to "bounce ideas off of" in the future. For example, if a business owner is considering investing in new equipment, that owner can contact another business owner she met at a trade show to get input on the pros and cons of specific types of equipment.

8 Build relationships with your team. Many businesses send their key employees to trade shows. This is a great opportunity for key team members to get involved in the industry, learn about

new products and practices, and meet key vendors. It also provides an opportunity for key team members to feel like an important part of the business and to build relationships with other team members away from the office.

9 Changes in latitude, changes in attitude. Trade shows provide a great reason to get out of the office for a day or two (or more). When an owner or manager is in the office, the majority of his or her time is spent dealing with immediate issues and "putting out fires." Trade shows provide an opportunity to step away from those daily fires and think about big picture goals and strategic plans for the business.

10 Attend the trade show because you can! After more than a year of shutdowns, social distancing, quarantines, and Zoom calls, Americans can finally gather with colleagues and friends at trade shows to gain knowledge and build relationships.

Trade shows provide a unique opportunity to gain targeted industry knowledge and to meet colleagues in the metal industry. COVID-19 restrictions prevented these gatherings for more than a year. As the economy reopens, trade shows will play a vital role in helping businesses succeed.

I look forward to seeing you at the ASC Machine Tools booth #411 at the Construction Rollforming Show in Cincinnati! **RF**

Chris Cox, JD, is the Southeast Sales Manager for ASC Machine Tools Inc., a sponsor of the Construction Rollforming Show. He can be contacted at ccox@ascmt.com.

Welcome to the April/May issue of Rollforming Magazine!

This is the issue *for* and *about* the 2021 Construction Rollforming Show in Cincinnati, Ohio, June 3rd and 4th.

You have no idea how gratified I am to type that sentence.

The last Construction Rollforming Show occurred in 2019. In that time, how the world has changed. Events in the last two years have included entire continents shutting down, widespread fear, riots, and a contested presidential election.

The construction industry did better than most, but now we are dealing with

some of the long-term consequences of living in interesting times; “interesting times” as interpreted as a curse of disorder and uncertainty attributed to Aesop, Confucious and Sir Austin Chamberlin.

The one thing we all seek more than anything now is a return to a state resembling normalcy. At least, I know I do.

I am happy to be extending you an invitation to come to Cincinnati June 3-4 and begin a return to normal.

One final piece of information — interesting in a *good* way — is that we have just recently finalized the dates

and location for the 2022 Construction Rollforming Show. Mark your calendars: November 9-10, 2022. Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans, Louisiana. Rollforming, pralines, beignets and etouffee—sounds like a great combination!



Gary Reichert
Publisher/CEO
Shield Wall Media



Mark your calendars: November 9-10, 2022. Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans, Louisiana.



2021 Construction Rollforming Show

Preliminary Educational Schedule

The final class schedule will be posted at the show. Time slots may change based on speaker availability.

THURSDAY, JUNE 3

8:00 AM

- Social Media and Digital Marketing
- Which Rollforming Line Fits My Needs the Best?
- New vs. Used Equipment

9:00 AM

- Fasteners for Metal Panels
- Software for Optimum Production
- Packaging and Shipping Metal Panels

10:00 AM

- Warranty Management for Coil Coatings
- Buying a Business or Planning an Exit
- Ways to Improve Your Panel Line Throughput

12:30 PM

- Keynote Address

2:00 PM

- Coil Basics
- Other Roll Forming Production Line Machines
- Paint 101: An Introduction to Coil Coatings

3:00 PM

- Coil Purchasing Strategies

4:00 PM

- Buying The Right Metal & Coatings For Your Products & Equipment
- Buying vs. Leasing Equipment
- Basic Sales Techniques

FRIDAY, JUNE 4

8:00 AM

- Closures and Ventilation
- Trailers and Towing Portable Rollformers
- Roll Former Maintenance

9:00 AM

- Solutions to Problems Cold Forming Metal

10:00 AM

- Moisture and Condensation Control
- Benders and Brakes: Better Buying Decisions
- The Role of Associations – Discussion



PLEASE NOTE:

- All topics are tentative at this point.
- All time slots are tentative.

Construction Rollforming Show

CINCINNATI, OH • JUNE 3-4, 2021

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Construction Rollforming Show Floorplan

CINCINNATI, OH • JUNE 3-4, 2021

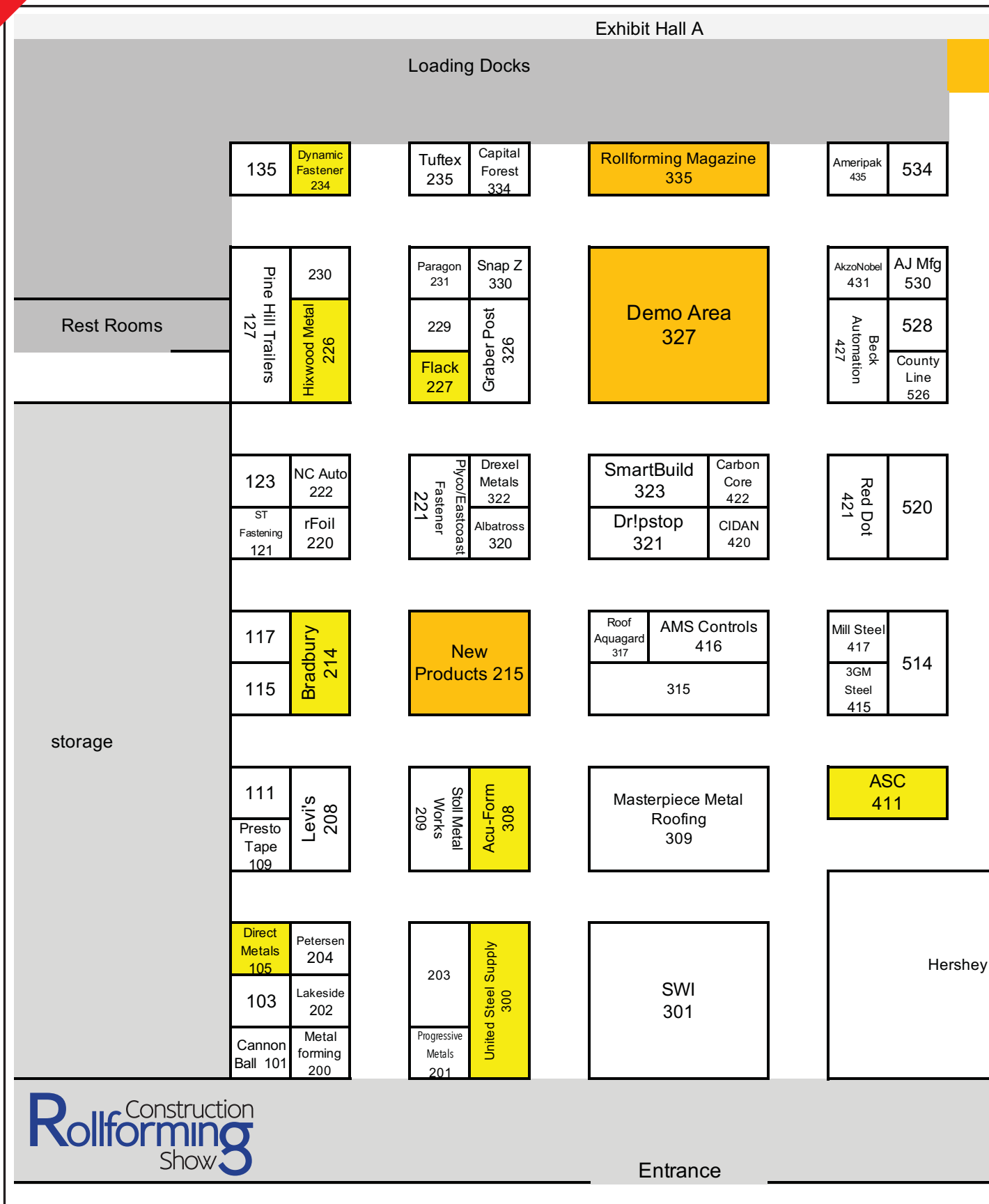


EXHIBIT HALL HOURS:

THURSDAY, JUNE 3: 12:30-5:30

FRIDAY, JUNE 4: 9:30-1:30

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concessions

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535

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531

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Bus 529

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Conden
Stop 527

Star 1
521

Big Steel
Rack
515

Heartland Sales
511

Metal Meister
401

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* EXHIBITORS MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE



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BOOTH # 411



BOOTH # 300



BOOTH # 234



BOOTH # 227

Rollforming Magazine.com

The New Look to Rollforming's Information Resource



SCAN TO VIEW

Welcome to
rollformingmagazine.com

Building Homes For Heroes Speaker To Give CRS Keynote

■ By Sharon Thatcher and Karen Knapstein

Jim Rogers, Director of Development for the national nonprofit Building Homes for Heroes, will be the keynote speaker for the 2021 Construction Rollforming Show. Building Homes for Heroes organizes the modification and building of mortgage-free homes gifted to injured veterans and their families.

After a successful career of more than 20 years in the Air Force serving in locations around the globe, followed by nearly a decade of supporting wounded veterans and their families in his current role, Rogers shares this message while speaking to Fortune 500 companies, businesses, organizations and participating in television and radio interviews across the country. He is tasked with helping the organization grow by uniting businesses, organizations and individuals around the common goal of supporting wounded veterans and their families nationwide.

Rogers holds a M.A. in Leadership and enjoys spending time with his family on their 50 acres of natural forested property and restoring his family's nearly 200-year-old historic farmhouse in the Mohawk Valley in Upstate New York.

Catch his inspiring message on the trade show floor beginning at 12:30 p.m. on opening day.



Jim Rogers

grew, and the organization grew.

Based in New York, Building Homes For Heroes is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that now serves the entire country. "We've gifted homes in 33 states with home gifts and modifications," Vesey said. "We're attempting to get to every state; that's the goal."

While home gifting is the largest program, Building Homes for Heroes offers many other types of assistance. These additional programs include financial planning, sponsorships for athletic programs, emergency support, and more.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the non-profit acted quickly and initiated a new program; it sent \$500 checks to veterans for emergency funding.

"Psychological wounds cause veterans to fear for their lives," explained Vesey. Due to Covid-19, those who suffer from PTSD are "afraid now for their spouse, children, and parents. They're afraid now for the people that they love."

Partnerships with national distributors are critical for the organization because those companies can ship directly to the building site, Vesey explained. Sponsors who provide materials get deductions for donating products and they are included in the promotional coverage.

At the local level, the organization is dependent on builders and architects to donate labor or time. When a suitable home location has been selected, Building Homes for Heroes partners with local builders and then pulls in those national product sponsors.

Building Homes for Heroes has set the bar high; on average, they seek to gift one home every 11 days. With continued support, the organization hopes to reach its 300th home gift by the end of 2021. RF

BUILDING HOMES FOR HEROES

Building Homes for Heroes was founded by Andy Pujol in 2006. He was inspired to help veterans after volunteering in the search and rescue effort in the aftermath of the 9-11 terrorist attacks.

According to Building Homes for Heroes Vice President Kimberly Vesey, one day, Pujol heard young veterans talking on the radio about the struggles they were dealing with and decided he would build a home and gift it to a veteran.

Vesey said it took Pujol time to incorporate and find his way, but after that one home was adapted and gifted, he thought, "Why stop now?" So the goals



Construction Rollforming Show



EXHIBITOR PROFILES

The Second Annual Construction Rollforming Show, to be held June 3-4 at the Duke Energy Convention Center and sponsored by Rollforming Magazine, is the only show dedicated to the roll-forming industry.



3GM Steel

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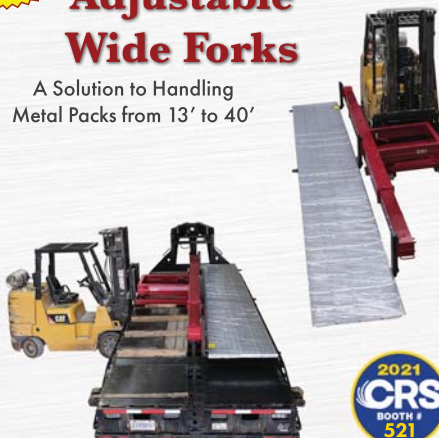
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Eagle Business Software is a small business ERP solution that specializes in integrating the sales, inventory, production, billing, and accounting processes for growing metal supply and roll-forming shops into one streamlined business management solution. Key features include the ability to provide your customer with an online portal, quote and sell metal by the linear foot and inch, sell building packages and kits, integrate with production equipment, and much more! These processes are directly tied into the Eagle Business Software to give you one central solution from which to manage your growing business.



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Booth 223

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www.rollformingmagazine.com

Rollforming Magazine launched in Fall 2018 to provide professional users of construction roll-forming equipment access to information about the industry: best practices, safety, technical information, available products, and more. Originally a quarterly magazine, in 2021 it publishes six times annually.



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Host Hotel Is One of Cincinnati's Historic Gems

The historic Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza Hotel and Carew Tower is the host hotel for this year's Construction Rollforming Show (CRS). At more than 90 years of age, the Art Deco building is one of Cincinnati's most famous landmarks. It overlooks Fountain Square at the corner of 5th and Vine Streets, where the city's first inhabitants settled nearly a century prior to its construction.

In relating its history, the Historic Hotels of America organization notes that real estate developer John J. Emery was behind the building's development. His dream was to create a "city within



After-hour events will be held at the Hilton, located across the street from the convention center. The Hilton has also provided great rates for overnight CRS guests. Book now for just \$149 a night! Limited rooms are available at this rate so act fast. Book through the show web page: <https://www.constructionmagnet.com/construction-rollforming-registration> or call 800.445.8667.

a city" as a multipurpose commercial structure with boutique shops, office space, and a luxury hotel. Because it sat on land previously housing a building called the Carew Building, it became known as Carew Tower.

Emery's dream for his grand new structure almost did not come to fruition. Construction was started in 1929, the year of the great stock market crash.



Fortuitously, Emery had gone against his banker's advice and took his money out of stock market investments to help pay for the tower project mere weeks before the market collapsed.

Money for the project also came from business partner William A. Starrett, a renowned skyscraper builder. Starrett Brothers, Inc., was the primary general contractor for the building, with the architectural blueprints coming from W.W. Ahlschlager & Associates.

It was one of the largest construction projects in the city at the time, employ-

ing hundreds of workers. Total cost was \$33 million.

Now owned by Hilton Properties, the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza Hotel and Carew Tower has won numerous awards. It has achieved both National Historic Register and National Landmark status from the U.S. Department of the Interior and is a charter member of the Historic Hotels of America. It also won the prestigious Preservation Honor award after its most recent renovations exceeded the government's Standards for Rehabilitation. [RF](#)



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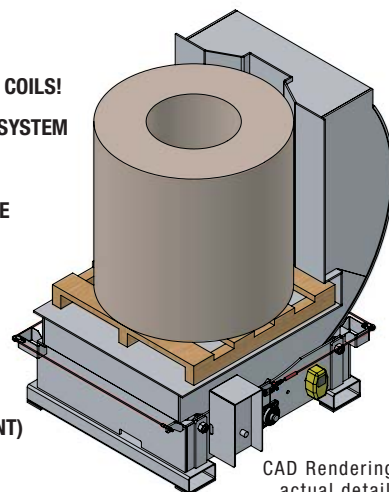
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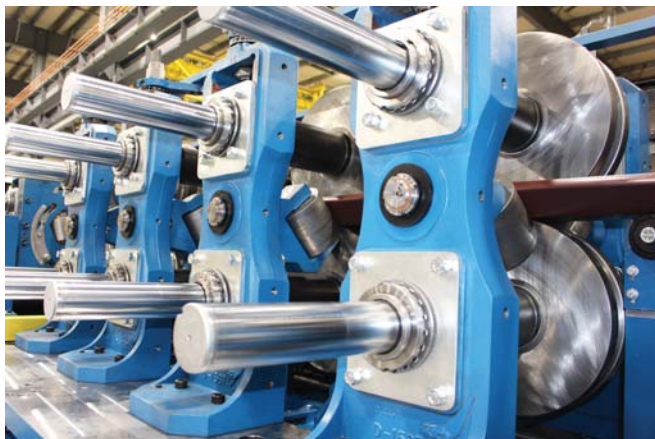


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New Products at the Construction Rollforming Show



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ASC's patented CZ Stacking System offers the fastest cycle times, handles the full range of Cee, U and Zee purlin, and can be added to any new or existing purlin roll-forming line.

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Information: www.ASCMT.com



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DYNAMIC FASTENER GOES TO NEW LENGTHS FOR HI-LO FASTENER & RELEASES NEW HAND GUIDE

Dynamic Fastener has released a new version of its popular Tool and Fastener Hand Guide. This 140-page, full-color free gem provides concise answers to questions pertaining to fastener applications, engineering data, availability of types, size ranges and fastener materials specific to the metal building industry. In addition to discussing screws and anchors, the Guide provides prices and other useful information relating to flashings, sealants, insulation tapes, safety equipment, hand tools, power tools and more.

The 2021 publication includes details on the Dyna-Guard snow retention system for metal roofs. It also includes information about the company's new rivet initiative that resulted in a stock level of 100 million rivets with 75 million pre-painted in more than 100 different colors.

To obtain your free 140-page Hand Guide, call (800) 821-5448.



The Hi-Lo Line

Dynamic Fastener has added additional lengths to partner with its very popular 12-16 x 1-1/2" T-17 Hi-Lo fastener. Lengths are now available in 2", 3" and 4". All lengths are available with a T-17 point, Hi-Lo threads and a 5/16" hex washer head. This screw is used to attach up to 18 gauge sheet metal to wood. Screw can also be used to plug a previous #9 or #10 pole barn screw or anytime a slightly larger fastener is desired. Screw is available with a 9/16" outside diameter sealing washer or without. Also comes standard with Dyna-Coat® 1000 hour salt spray premium coating.

Information: www.dynamicfastener.com



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ing's metal envelope and the harmful effects of condensation. Adhered directly to the roof and wall panels during manufacturing, Aqua Defender forms a soft, clean surface. It absorbs moisture, prevents rust from forming, and extends the maintenance-free life of your building. Its light color can even reduce lighting demands. Aqua Defender stands between condensation and your roof, guarding against rust, corrosion, and drips. It keeps your buildings clean and dry and your livestock, equipment, and inventory safe.

Information: www.roofaquaguard.com

AKZONOBEL MAKES COLOR COMPLEXITY A THING OF THE PAST

Businesses across the coil coating industry can look forward to improved product availability, concentrated color volumes and quicker turns on projects, thanks to AkzoNobel's CERAM-A-STAR 1050 Select color program.

For coil coaters, CERAM-A-STAR 1050 Select allows longer runs of popular colors and less color switch-outs, which improves productivity. For service centers and distributors of painted coil, the new system enhances operational efficiency by reducing color complexity and increasing demand for high-moving colors. For OEMs and regional rollformers, it helps to drive targeted color selection and customer satisfaction through enhanced performance and product availability.

The CERAM-A-STAR 1050 Select color program is further supported by AkzoNobel's suite of digital color tools, accessed through its Canopy app.

Canopy includes information and tools on color section, color sensor integration, RAL standard search, and color visualization as well as standard color palette tools.

Information: www.coilcoatings.akzonobel.com/us



QB METAL SHOP NOW CONNECTS TO MRS ROLL FORMERS

NC Automation has rolled out new integration features with its QB Metal Shop manufacturing and scheduling software. It can now connect directly to MRS roll-former machines. Control the machine directly from the scheduling software, and automatically record production and inventory usage in real time. Additional sensors added to the machine sense the correct profile, color, gauge, and coil grade are being used, displaying an error if there is a mismatch between the software and machine settings, and even prevents the machine from starting up to produce the wrong product.

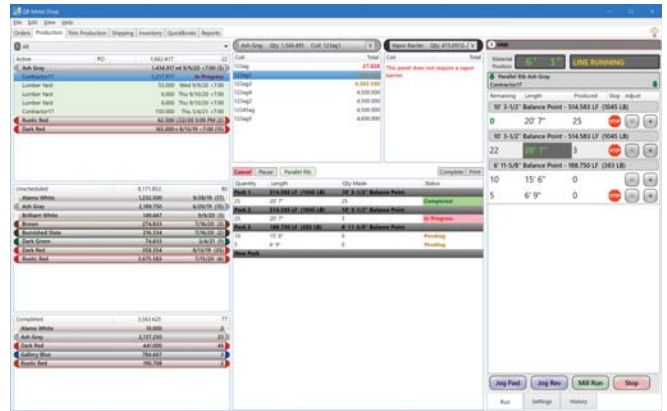
Customers can also enter their own orders and custom trims directly from the fabricator's website. After that it only takes six mouse clicks to schedule and produce the order, with the customer able to view the status through an online app.

Product can then be scheduled for delivery through QB Metal Shop, with maps showing multiple stops for different orders to help streamline the delivery process. When the driver delivers the order, he can take a picture with his phone or tablet and attach it to the order. The customer not only sees that it has been delivered, but they can go to the app to see a picture of the order and where it was placed on the job site.

Information: 419-631-7669; email neil@neilcollc.com

NC AUTOMATION INTRODUCES MAJOR UPGRADE FOR BUILDING CREATOR 3.0

NC Automation continues to expand on the capabilities of its two popular production software products. It is introducing the latest version of its design program, Building Creator (now com-



patible with Mac computers), and the expanded features of QB Metal Shop for scheduling.

Developer Neil Burkholder reports that Building Creator 3.0 is almost an entire rewrite and includes a lot of new features for the design software. He started by asking "What kind of building can be designed in 60 seconds?" then came up with the answer.

Building Creator 3.0 now integrates with the popular post-frame estimating software, SmartBuild Systems, which is the exclusive reseller.

SMARTBUILD SYSTEMS INTEGRATES WITH BUILDING CREATOR ON SKETCHUP

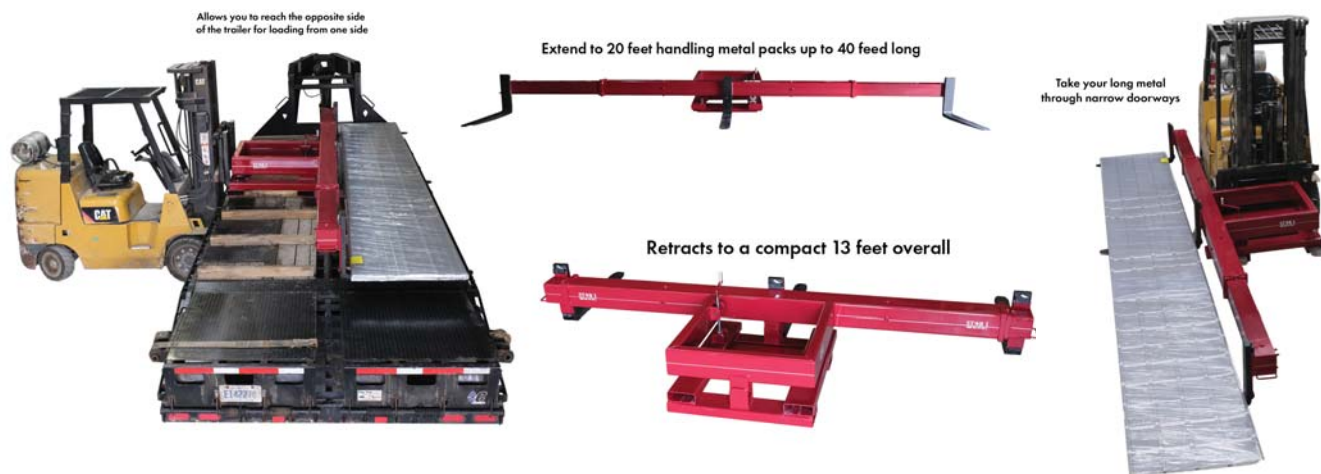
SmartBuild Systems is the complete design system for post-frame construction, and because it's web-based, the critical set of data driving design — framing standards, part numbers, pricing, and other variables — are easily changed in one location. This functionality ensures that users, salespeople, designers, and dealers are instantly updated with the latest information.

But it may not be right for everyone.

Since SmartBuild is used online, access was restricted from the Amish and those without internet access ... until now!

Building Creator — a desktop solution requiring no internet — integrates with SmartBuild, allowing for offline building creation WITH post-frame core function automation. Users design structures on Building Creator, then the file is sent to SmartBuild for dataset generation. Please note: SketchUp is required to use Building Creator; a 30 day free trial of SketchUp is provided.

Information: <https://smartbuildsystems.com/building-creator>

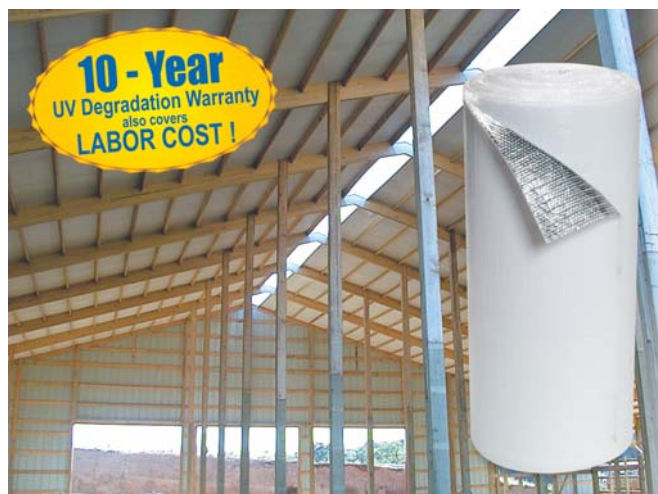


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Moving long metal packs are now a one-man job requiring no straps or second fork truck with Star 1 Products' NEW Adjustable Wide Forks. Forks can be adjusted in width from a compact 13' or extended to 20' overall to accommodate metal packs up to 40' in length.

Adjustable Wide Forks is a solution designed specifically to get those long metal packs through narrow doorways and allow you to reach the opposite side of a trailer for loading and unloading, always keeping your metal flat and undamaged. The tilt adjustment gives you the flexibility you need when loading and unloading on uneven terrain.

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ylene bubbles bonded to and sandwiched between a radiant barrier metalized foil and white polyethylene sheet. rFOIL is specifically designed to control heat gain or loss, and prevent interior condensation, in all types of metal and metal-clad buildings.

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- Controls heat gain/loss and prevents interior condensation in all types of post- and metal-frame buildings

www.rfoil.com

Information on each of these featured new products will be available at the 2021 Construction Rollforming Show.

Visit each booth to speak personally with company representatives.

Wondering what to do in Cincinnati in the shadow of Covid? Well, many of the popular spots now boast open signs for visitors! And the late-spring date for this year's Rollforming Show makes navigating out and about a pleasure.

THINGS TO DO IN

C I N C I



Greater Cincinnati is widely regarded as one of the greenest cities in the country, so finding a shady spot to sit and enjoy the warm weather is not a problem. But for more action, head to the **Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden**. The zoo was officially opened in 1875, making it the second oldest zoo in the United States. It was originally 65 acres, but now includes surrounding blocks and several reserves in Cincinnati's suburbs. Part of the Botanical Garden can be seen within the zoo landscape, which continuously changes as the many plants in the extensive collection come into bloom. PHOTO CREDIT: KATHY NEWTON



Giant beasts roam the halls of the **Cincinnati Museum Center**. Six prehistoric beasts, many at the center of ongoing scientific research, tower overhead. State-of-the-art interactive elements will help you experience the late Jurassic like never before. Dinosaur Hall also utilizes globally-significant fossil collections to explore dinosaur evolution, ecology, and biology.



Area hotel attractions offer intriguing opportunities. Lytle Park Hotel presides over a beautiful urban park and inventively embraces the outdoors, while the Kinley Hotel brings a boutique hotel experience downtown. Its restaurant, Khora, was named a 2020 Most Anticipated American Restaurant Opening by both *Vogue* and *Food & Wine*. Meanwhile, the celebrated 21c Museum Hotel features site-specific works by some of the contemporary art world's most exciting talent and rotating exhibitions that transform the galleries into ever-changing spaces.



List of reopening protocols and attractions open for business:
<https://www.cincyusa.com/covid-19/>

N N A T I



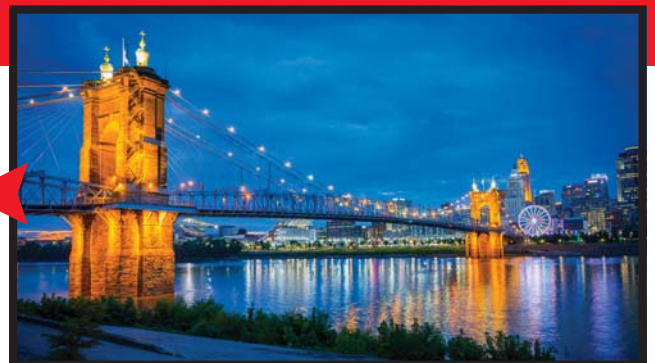
If you are planning to arrive a day early or stay a day late one of the 'biggest' attractions you don't want to miss is the **Ark Encounter**. Located just 40 miles south of Cincinnati in Kentucky, The Ark Encounter features a full-size Noah's Ark, built according to the dimensions given in the Bible's Book of Genesis. This marvel of engineering is seven stories tall and is more than a football field and a half long. The Ark is the largest timber-frame structure in the world, full of world-class exhibits designed to answer questions about the biblical account of Noah's Ark and the Flood. PHOTO: COURTESY OF ARK ENCOUNTER



The sister museum to Ark Encounter, the **Creation Museum**, is located just 20 miles southwest of Cincinnati (40 miles from the Ark). The state-of-the-art museum allows you to venture through biblical history, stunning exhibits, botanical gardens, planetarium, zoo, zip line adventure course, and much more. This 75,000-square-foot facility has welcomed millions of guests since opening in Petersburg, Kentucky. PHOTO: COURTESY OF CREATION MUSEUM

OTHER VISTOR OPTIONS

- National Underground Railroad Freedom Center
- John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge
- Taft Museum of Art
- The American Sign Museum
- 31 different breweries to explore





AA Seamless was started in 2007 with one truck, one trailer, and one gutter roll former. Above are gathered some of the 2021 crew and equipment fleet.

AA Seamless LLC

Manufacturing mentality helped shape success of Wisconsin gutter business

■ By Sharon Thatcher

The seamless gutter business isn't just about installing gutters, it's also about manufacturing gutters. That's the contention of Victor and Tony Lottice, owners of AA Seamless, with offices in Athens and Rhinelander Wisconsin. Using that mentality, they have built their business based on a lot of principles seen in the manufacturing world: quality control systems, organized inventory, marketing programs, employee education, employee incentives, even statistical analysis. As a result of that diligence, they have grown their business to consistently give customers the best product and the best installation experience. Regular customers include major names in the regional construction industry for new homes, manufacturing facilities, and commercial businesses in addition to the myriad of existing homeowners.

The father and son team (Victor and Tony, respectively) developed their business mentality by first working for others. A family background in construction, as well as Victor's professional experience as a manager for a major corporate sawmill facility in Bemidji, Minnesota, helped provide the tools for the successful launch of AA Seamless LLC.

From the beginning, Tony followed the construction family tradition and was the first to try his hand at the seamless gutter trade by helping a family friend in Bemidji. After that, the Lottices moved to Wisconsin — where Victor's wife had family

— and Victor and Tony helped out a local home builder while they started their gutter business.

They began their business with one truck, one trailer, one gutter roll former (a New Tech 5"/6" combo), and they worked out of a small garage. That was 2007, and even though the economy around them was crumbling into a recession, they refused to abandon their core values: "being attentive to customer needs and requests, excellent communication, commitment to quality work, and the best product line available."

It paid off!

Today they teach those same values to their crewmembers, who roll across the state and the surrounding fringes in five trucks each pulling a trailer containing a roll former inside (four New Tech 5"/6" combos, and one KWM Gutterman half round machine). Also in the fleet are three estimating cars. Trucks, trailers and cars all proclaim the AA Seamless advertising message and are meticulously cleaned and routinely maintained. They long ago moved out of the house garage to a larger building. That too has been outgrown, so this year they are planning for an even larger 100-by-120 foot building to keep the business growing and equipment protected.

While visiting with Victor and Tony in January, Victor opened a filing cabinet drawer to show quote sheets inches thick. "Here are all the jobs we did last year," Victor said. Files

in the drawer below are all the quotes that are still open. Both are impressive in size.

They refuse to lower their quality or their prices just to get a job. “Other [gutter installation companies], if they don’t get the job, they’ll say, ‘oh, I’ll have to lower my price,’” Tony said. In reality, many of those building owners never follow through with an installation. “You can drive by some of these places three years later and there’s still no gutters on the building. Not all customers appreciate quality or consider the difference. We have had customers tell us we were too expensive, buy from someone else, and a few years later call us to fix or replace the project, stating ‘I wish we would have gone with you guys!’”

EQUIPMENT

One thing their asset history and business timeline show is their practice of buying all new equipment. Although they started with a 2003 Ford Super Duty truck in 2007, by 2011 they were only buying new. “It pays to have a new truck with a warranty,” Victor learned. The trucks are well cared for by the crews and are traded in for new trucks at around 90,000 miles. The truck of choice is the Ford F-350 diesel crew cab.

For trailers, they use Featherlite, MTI, and Hallmark but concede that it doesn’t seem to matter if they buy a higher-end \$34,000 trailer or a lower-end \$12,000 trailer. Explained Tony, “any trailer that goes bumping down the road every day like these do, you’re only going to get five years out of it before it needs to get fixed.”

AA Seamless also has a steaming trailer, used in northern areas like Wisconsin to steam off high volumes of snow and ice on the roofs of residential and commercial properties.

Of all their equipment, they have the fewest headaches with their roll formers. “They’re pretty bullet proof,” Victor said. “Most of the problems are with wearable parts that you have to replace on a combo machine, where you’re switching back and forth from 5 to 6 inch.”

One “old dog” was just recently retired, not due to mechanical issues, but electrical. “It’s running high amps,” Victor explained. We just haven’t had time to look at it; it may run again.”

Tony defends the old 5’/6” combo, explaining that it is the practice at AA Seamless for the oldest equipment — the oldest truck, the oldest trailer, the oldest roll former — to go out first every workday, “so basically that machine got used more because it was in the oldest trailer,” he explained.

In fact, there are few parts to wear out. Newer machines use neoprene rollers to pull the metal across the free-floating forming rollers and the movement is relatively slow to assure proper forming.

“Metal has what is called memory,” Victor said. “You have this flat piece of metal, and it says, ‘by golly, I’m going to be flat for the rest of my life.’” It has to be coaxed into taking shape.

It’s easier to get that reluctant piece of metal to be shaped



This KWM Gutterman half round roll former was on a jobsite cranking out 184' of black aluminum gutter for a vacation home.

into straight angles (the typical K-style) than into a flawless half round. “So, a half round machine is four feet longer than a K-style machine because it has to run a little bit slower and longer,” he said. “It makes a dish (or bowl), and you want that dish to stay in dish form ... so it takes more time.”

MAINTENANCE

When I visited the shop, trailers and machines were inside undergoing annual maintenance. The trailers were getting completely detailed with new paint inside, waxed and polished outside, and whatever else needed to be done.

“The machines sit out in the trailers, and even though the trailers are fully enclosed, when we are on the job site all the doors are open and they get exposed to 100% of the elements,” Tony explained. “So, we go through them completely and clean all the rollers, oil everything replacing worn parts, screws, bolts and then we wax them to make sure everything is operating just like new!”

Victor said the company uses the 5S method for maintenance, something he brought with him from the manufacturing world: 1-Sort, 2-Set in Order, 3-Shine, 4-Standardize, and 5-Sustain. 5S

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The Way We Roll))

is explained by 5Stoday.com as “a system for organizing spaces so work can be performed efficiently, effectively, and safely.” It focuses on clean space to avoid injury and increase production. It’s an important part of the AA Seamless philosophy.

EMPLOYEES

A solid company culture has helped AA Seamless find and keep a number of high-quality employees. “We find the people often come to us,” Victor said. “Part of it is treating people well and having a good reputation.”

While the company works year-round, there is understandably more workload in the summer and finding additional help has been a challenge. “We learned it’s better to recruit employees right out of high school, show them a money-making plan versus diving into college, and after college having all this debt,” Tony said.

Another source for workers has been guys that have found factory work not to their liking. When asked why they want to work for AA Seamless Tony said a common comment is ‘because we get to travel the countryside and we get to be outside.’

“Once in a while they’ll complain about rain or cold in winter, but then we remind them of the [factory],” Victor joked.

Two places that have not proved very good for finding help: the local vocational technical college which ended its carpentry program three years ago because no one was interested, and temp agencies. One of their temps is memorialized in a photo



A consistent company culture of good training and fair treatment has allowed AA Seamless to find and keep a core of top-quality employees.

of his hand displayed on the office wall with a nail protruding through two fingers, the results of a nail gun mishap. It happened on his first day, in the first 15 minutes on a siding job. He’s fine now, no permanent damage.

Although on-the-job training plays a key role at AA Seamless, they also train in the shop using gutter and down spout components to help illustrate procedures and practices. Then they

train with the roll formers and installation techniques. When ready, they are placed with a crew that consists of a Master Installer and seasoned crew. This is where they really start learning and developing their skills. The AA Seamless training process “is more like an apprenticeship,” Victor said, with each crew including a master installer, installers, and trainees (apprentices).

Their training and production policies have paid off. “You get these crews of guys that make it a competition,” Tony said. “They want to do the best job, the most quality job with no callbacks, and they want to be as efficient as possible so they can get more work done each day. Instead of three jobs a day, they’ll try to do four.”

QUALITY MATERIALS & MANUFACTURING

AA Seamless in part credits the quality materials they use for fewer callbacks. Unlike the typical hangers you can bend with your hand, and zinc screws that rust or “turn into black-eyed peas” and fail, AA Seamless uses .032 Gutter, .029 Spout ceramic coated hanger screws, and stainless steel connector screws. “Oh yes, and not to mention, hangers you cannot bend with your hand,” Victor added.

Another aspect of doing a great job is the manufacturing of the gutter. A lot of “Gutter Guys” are just out there running a machine and what ever comes out goes up on the project,” Victor said. “If the gutter is not roll formed properly it can lead to premature failure and unhappy customers! So, the first step in hanging a great gutter is ‘forming’ a great gutter.”

Victor emphasizes to his workers: “When you’re roll forming, you’re actually manufacturing, so you have to have quality control in mind when the product is coming out of the machine.”

Most of their work is in aluminum, but they also work with steel, galvanized, copper and even Kynar and Hylar finished aluminum for high-end jobs. “I don’t know of any other company that deals with Kynar,” Victor said. The

industry standard for gutter coatings is baked enamel.

“The supply chain for standard gutters is very competitive,” Victor said. “When you go to a Kynar finish, then you have to figure it out, it’s coming off master rolls, it’s all special ordered from Petersen [Aluminum]. You have to make your own end caps; you have to make your own corners.” Most companies are not willing to tackle the extra training and extra time it takes to execute a project like this. AA Seamless does it in spite of those fears and has carved out for themselves another niche to fill.

A unique service AA Seamless provides, absent from competition, is retrofitting gutter systems, for example on a Butler panel roof. Typically used for commercial and industrial buildings, Butler panel roofs use gutters that are secured by tucking in and under the roofing. Replacing those gutters requires surgical cutting and removal of the existing gutter and proprietary installation of the new system. Victor states “we have been very successful at this.”

LEARNING FROM MISTAKES

Call-backs are rare and AA Seamless looks at them as opportunities to learn and grow their business. “When you answer a call-back (some aspect of the project not working properly or to the customer’s satisfaction) it lets the customer know that you care, they are not alone and it builds customer confidence,” Victor said. He noted that all call-backs are shared and reviewed in meetings, so the entire group learns from each mistake.

MATERIAL HANDLING

Smaller companies frequently order aluminum coil by the job only an inch or two thick. AA Seamless buys full rolls weighing about 375 pounds. The crew can handle these bigger coils because of a unique trailer hoist system Victor developed and markets. He used his manufacturing experience and exposure to industrial cranes to design a miniaturized version that is installed in every trailer.



Victor developed this unique trailer hoist for handling bigger coils. They are installed in every trailer.

Victor also created and markets a hand brake for bending the Leaf Solution gutter guard they use.

ALL IN A DAY’S WORK

Due to the company’s extensive network with other construction professionals, Victor said there isn’t a job they won’t consider, but their primary focus is on gutters and roofing.

“My motto to the guys is, don’t ever tell me what you can’t do; tell me what you can do. There’s always a solution. Tell me, ‘I don’t think we can do *this*, but I think we can do *this*.’”

“If a customer has a problem, they’re calling on us to solve it. If we can’t solve it, they’re not our customer.”

When asked how competitive their market is Victor responded, “We just tell people we don’t have any competitors. We tell people that you’re not going to find anybody else that’s going to do the quality job that we do, that will answer the phone, and come back should you have a problem, and that’s going to give you the service we will. When we do a job for you, you’re part of the family.” **RF**



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