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Vol. 6, No. 3

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Prior to the standing seam roof and metal wall panels being installed, Sharkskin Ultra SA® provided excellent protective qualities, which included long term UV resistance and excellent high wind uplift resistance.

The beautiful eagle feather metal roof detail was designed and specified to last. The roof is comprised of 22-ga. 70% PVDF-coated Galvalume panels that transition from Silver Metallic on the left end to Slate Gray as the middle tone to Dark Bronze on the right end. The Sharkskin Ultra SA® was selected as the roof underlayment beneath the multi-colored feather-shaped metal roof and metal wall panels, as it will provide long term moisture resistance.

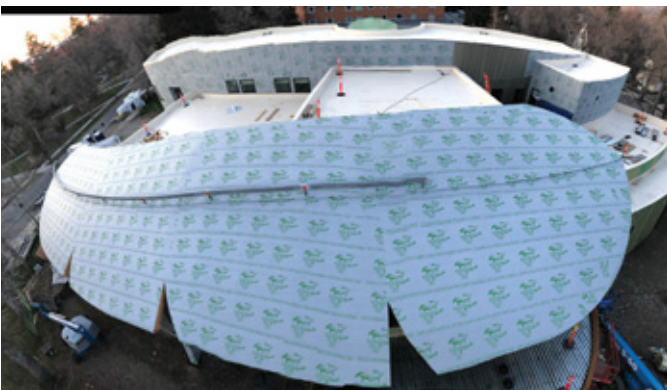
Beneath the standing seam metal roof and wall cladding, Sharkskin Ultra SA® is also providing high-temperature resistance.

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**Photos, top & middle: Montana State University & Chris Kamman (SkyLab Media House). Bottom: Zach Kilwein, Beartooth Metal Roofing.**

**Metal Roofing Manufacturer:**  
Sheffield Metals International, Sheffield, Ohio

**Roofing Contractor:** Zach Kilwein, Beartooth Metal Roofing, Billings, Montana

# The Countdown Has Begun

■ By Missy Beyer, Director of Events

As I write this it is mid-May, and we are finally seeing some sunshine. It's hard to believe that my topic is a trade show happening when we will be moving back into the dreary days known as Fall and Winter in Wisconsin. But here we are, already talking about the 2023 Construction Rollforming Show being held September 27-28 at the Duke Energy Center in Cincinnati, Ohio. Although this isn't my first show with Shield Wall Media and most definitely not my first trade show, it is the first I will be managing for SWM after transitioning to this role. I'm excited to work with our exhibitors to make this already outstanding show even better.

If you roll form or use benders or brakes to form panels, channels, studding, soffits, gutters, carport, or other construction components this is your show to attend. If you want to reach those that do their own fabrication and buy materials and components in pallet, container, or truck load lots you want to be an exhibitor at the Construction Rollforming Show.

Now is the time to confirm your spot at the show whether it be as an exhibitor or an attendee. September is right around the corner. You can find registration information for the show online at RollformingMagazine.com and I welcome your calls or emails to reserve your exhibitor space at the show. Maybe you just have a great idea for the show. Drop me a line and let me know what you have in mind.

See you at the Show!

*Missy Beyer*

## CONSTRUCTION ROLLFORMING SHOW 2023

September 27-September 28

The Construction Rollforming Show is targeted to an audience of medium to large builders, dealers, distributors, and manufacturers. During this special event, more than 50 exhibitors will fill the 15,000-sq.-ft. show floor. From raw materials to automation software, exhibitors will feature products and information to support all facets of the roll-forming industry, including, but not limited to: Roll Formers, Coil

Suppliers, Paint & Coating Manufacturers, Clips, Clamps & Components, Design & Efficiency Automation Software, Snow Retention, Ventilation & Moisture Control. Education and special presentation topics include: Inventory Control Management, Improving Quality Control & Management, Coil & Steel Metallurgy, Paint & Coating Technology, Business Best Practices & Development.

## GARAGE SHED & CARPORT BUILDER SHOW

Since we publish magazines that have been around for decades, Shield Wall Media has long-standing relationships with suppliers and manufacturers. The Garage, Shed & Carport Builder Show brings many of them together so builders of special-use residential structures can find the materials and services they need all in one place. In addition to a robust exhibit hall, the show includes educational sessions and other networking opportunities for manufacturers and shed builders. RF

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20,000lb Drag Brake Double Arm Uncoiler from ASC Machine Tools.  
Photo courtesy of ASC Machine Tools

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• Portable Roll-Forming Rigs

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**Gary Reichert,**  
Publisher, Shield Wall Media



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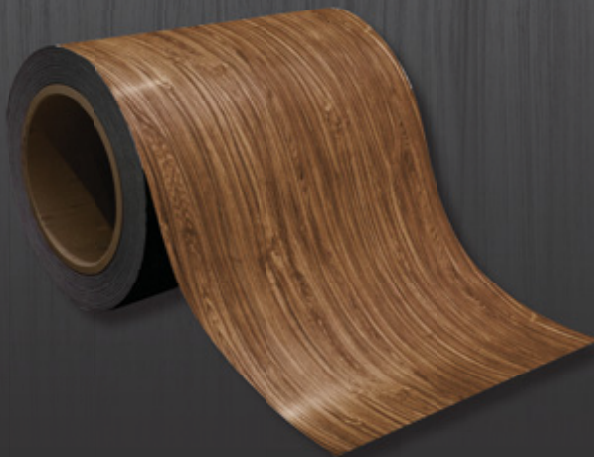
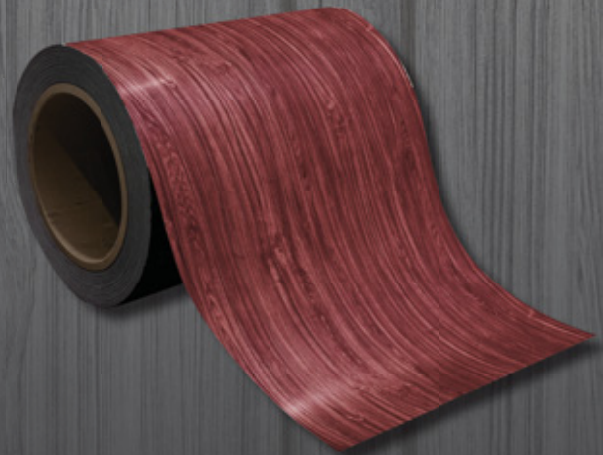
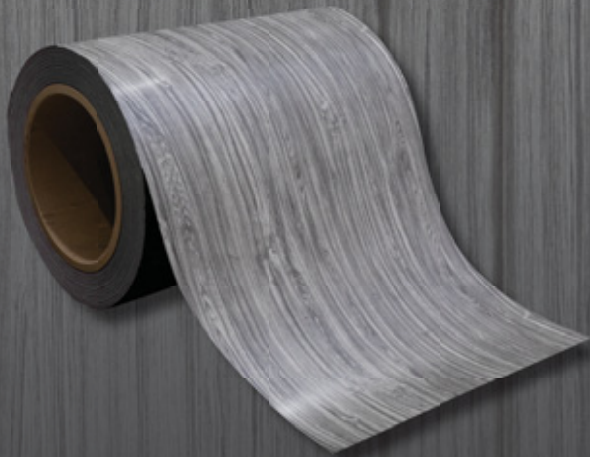
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# Industry Insights

## The Importance of Technology in Metal-Forming Industries

■ By Amanda Johnson, Roper Whitney

In the metal-forming industries such as roofing and architectural work, technology plays a crucial role in enhancing efficiency and precision. With the advancement of technology, metal-forming machines have become increasingly sophisticated, providing better accuracy and reducing waste. In this article, we will discuss the importance of technology in the metal-forming industries and why it is essential to keep your machines up to date with the latest technology.

### ACCURACY AND PRECISION

One of the significant benefits of technology in the metal-forming industries is its ability to improve accuracy and precision. Metal-forming machines equipped with computer numerical control (CNC) technology are capable of producing highly accurate and precise parts, which is essential in industries such as roofing and architectural work. This precision helps to minimize material waste, reduces the need for secondary machining, and improves overall product quality. It also helps to reduce the time spent on manual operations, which can be labor-intensive and prone to errors.

### EFFICIENCY

Efficiency is another essential factor in the metal-forming industries. In the roofing and architectural work industries,



**Metal-forming machines equipped with CNC technology are capable of producing precise components.** PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROPER WHITNEY



**Fold sequence technical data.**

companies are under increasing pressure to produce high-quality products at a lower cost. By incorporating the latest technology into metal-forming machines, companies can streamline their production processes, reducing lead times, and increasing productivity. This improved efficiency helps businesses to stay competitive in the marketplace and meet the demands of their customers.

### UP-TO-DATE MACHINES

As technology continues to evolve, it is essential to keep your metal-forming machines up to date with the latest advancements. This can be achieved through regular maintenance and upgrades to your existing equipment or investing in new machines. Upgrading your machines can help to improve accuracy, reduce waste, and increase efficiency, ultimately leading to increased profitability for your business.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, technology plays a crucial role in the metal-forming industries such as roofing and architectural work. By incorporating the latest technology into metal forming machines, businesses can achieve greater accuracy, efficiency and ultimately leading to increased profitability. It is essential to keep your machines up to date with the latest technology to stay competitive in the marketplace and meet the demands of your customers. As technology continues to evolve, it is important to stay current with the latest advancements to remain competitive and ensure your business's success. RF



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# Convincing the Eye

Steel Dynamics debuts new digitally printed steel

■ By Sharon Thatcher

Printed steel to feign the look of wood or camo is certainly not a new concept, but now Steel Dynamics (SDI) has entered the market with a game-changing new generation of technology. The steelmaker's Butler, Indiana, team spent 2-1/2 years developing the digital designed product, Tru>Steel HD. It entered the market last September 2022, and has been making its way around the trade show circuit to expanding audience appeal.

Don Switzer, Manager of Sales, Steel Dynamics Flat Roll Group, explained that Tru>Steel HD was originally targeted to the garage door market. It has, however, caught the eye of rollformers and building contractors who see the emerging market for wall panel, both interior and exterior, an ideal fit for the



**400 DPI scans create realistic images of wood that can be manipulated to add additional elements prior to being transferred to metal.** SDI PHOTO

specialty coil.

One customer is using it to create a log cabin affect using steel, working with SDI to incorporate a realistic look of

Graber Post Buildings assisted SDI with selecting images that would be most receptive to the board and batten niche. "Graber Post did a fantastic job," Switzer said. "They were actually our first Galvalume customer, and also our first painted Galvalume customer, and now they were our first digital print customer."

It is too soon to show off a board and batten building that incorporates the new wall product, but Trent Wagler at Graber Post noted that a display of Tru>Steel HD drew strong interest among visitors to their booth at the Frame Building Expo in February. With the popularity of board and batten spreading rapidly, he thinks Tru>Steel HD will follow. "We had a small sample of cedar gray on our table, and it caught quite a few eyes. We had a lot of good feedback. We had a lot of people stop in, pick it up, feeling it and asking questions about it. I do think it was a hit."

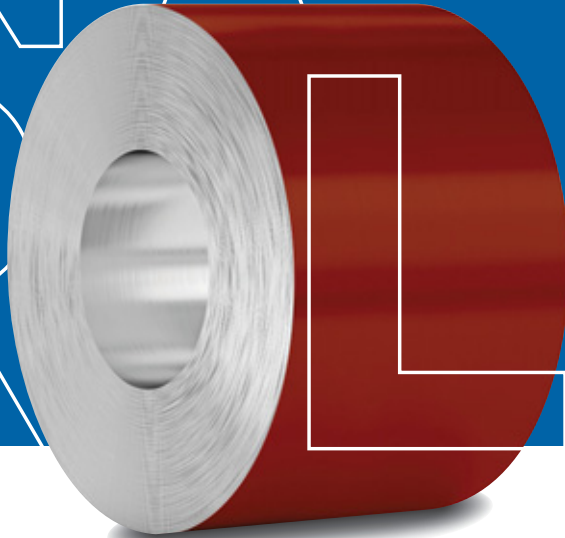
He said the company ordered a small quantity of Tru>Steel HD initially to gauge its reception. It sold out prior to the Expo, prompting them to reorder.

The product is also available through



**Graber Post Buildings was consulted to help develop digital prints that would appeal to the growing popularity of board and batten siding. Graber installed some of the wood, rough sawn cedar in gray, for an office conference room shown here.** GRABER POST PHOTO

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United Steel Supply that services the construction market. They are stocking four to six colors to start and have already sold out their first orders and have reordered.

### WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT TRU>STEEL HD

Switzer explained that the historical system for making designer steel used rotogravure, common in the newspaper and magazine world. Manufacturers essentially take a photo and create a pattern of art that is transferred to the steel on etched rollers. “Depending on the diameter of the roll, that pattern repeats every 29 to 31 inches,” he said, adding: “When you want to design in the true character of wood, you’re somewhat limited. If you would want to put a knot or a mark in the wood, it would repeat every 29 to 31 inches.”

Some customers wanted SDI to enter that market, but SDI saw too many disadvantages and realized that a new frontier in digital printing was evolving.

“Four or five years ago we began studying digital printing,” Switzer said. “We waited for the technology to advance before moving ahead.”

Instead of starting with a photograph, SDI’s system — which the company’s own team of experts developed — uses high tech 3-D scanners and real wood for its wood-grain designs. “It takes hours and hours to take the scan and develop that image,” he described. “Then we transfer that image and work it with our creative team, and basically form that image into a pattern our customers are looking for.”

The image can be quickly adjusted to add or delete elements of design or to adjust colors. It can run on a size range of coil from .015-.030 x 36”-60” wide. One of its best assets is that the image is repeatable over and over again without image degradation.

Unlike the rotogravure system that requires the coil to go through the process twice when color is added, the

digital system allows for the change to be integrated immediately into the digital design. This also allows a single coil to accommodate multiple images.

“We thought that would provide customers a better look, that custom look they were looking for. And the [repeating pattern] would be significantly longer,” Switzer continued. “The advantage



*Close-up of Tru>Steel HD in Natural Hickory.*  
SDI PHOTO

of our system is that we have up to a 32-foot repeat. That allows you to put in knots and grain and images that make the product look so much more realistic, with more depth of image ... we can put knots in, we can take knots out, we can do things that really make the product very, very unique. When you etch a roll in the historical system, you’re stuck with what’s on that roll.”

To withstand the elements for exterior use, Tru>Steel HD is finished with an

electron beam clear coat barrier protection. The paint system carries a 20-year limited warranty at this time.

SDI has developed more than a dozen stock images of wood and camouflage, including but not limited to rough sawn cedar in natural, weathered, and distressed, oak, walnut, hickory, and pecky cyprus. In the pipeline is weathered barn siding and more.

Tru>Steel HD is the first print-designed product made by a steel mill in North America. Forerunners have all been third-party. Switzer said it is a premium product but is competitive with printed steel elsewhere in the marketplace.

The current products are focused on vertical application, but SDI anticipates that roofing will follow.

Part of the charm of the new steel is that consumers can have the look of wood without some of its adverse properties, and it also ticks all the boxes for “green.” SDI makes all its steel in electric arc furnaces using at least 80% recycled steel, “so we are replacing wood, which is not recyclable, and we’re replacing it with a product that can be recycled at end of life,” he said.

In addition, the electron beam coating and curing systems developed for the process have no VOCs and related adverse environmental issues. [RF](#)



*SDI bought the equipment to create Tru>Steel HD, but not the process. The process was developed by a team at SDI over the course of two-and-a-half years.* SDI PHOTO



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# Safety PINs:

## First Steps to OSHA Compliance

### Plan

Create an action plan that includes the following:

- Procedures for reporting fire and other emergencies.
- Procedures to account for all employees after evacuation.
- Procedures for employees who remain behind to complete critical operations before evacuating (such as turning off equipment).
  - Procedures for employees performing rescue or medical duties.
  - Names or job titles of employees who others can contact to find out more about the action plan.
  - Training of designated employees who will assist others to evacuate.
  - Review of the plan with every employee when the plan is developed or when they are assigned safety duties. Review again when the duty assignments change or the plan changes.

- Ensure exits are free of explosive or highly flammable items.
- Look for possible obstacles to safe navigation of walkways and egress of buildings.

**Consider This:** Trips, slips and falls are the most common workplace accident. Making certain that there are no obstacles to moving from one place to the other is one of the most important safety precautions that a company can undertake. RF

*Note: This is a condensation of some of OSHA's basic guidelines.*

### Inspect

Take a look at your facility to ensure a safe environment.

- The alarm system must be in working order. Further the system must have a distinctive signal for each purpose, e.g. fire, tornado, etc.
  - Sprinkler systems must be on and working properly.
  - Are your fire doors easily opened?
  - Make sure walkway layout does not require workers to come close to equipment with moving parts or sharp edges.
  - Ensure that exits are placed so that employees do not have to move toward hazardous areas in order to exit the building.



Walkways should be kept clear. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BRADBURY GROUP

### Neaten

Make walkways and exits safely navigable.

- Walkways and exits should be clear of extraneous items that could impede progress.
  - Ensure, as much as is feasible, that walkways are dry.
  - Fix hazards such as loose boards. Ensure that walkways are ice-free.

For OSHA's Full Guidelines:  
See <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs>.



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# Relationships Are the Backbones of the Business

Mid-South Aluminum Celebrates 30 Years!

■ By Linda Schmid

**M**id-South Aluminum Holdings LLC is a family business, begun by a father and son, Alan Sallee, Sr. and Jr. who saw an empty niche and decided to fill it. The year was 1993 and the niche was as a supplier of coil for gutters and downspouts. They started Mid-South Aluminum in Jackson, Tennessee.

## STILL A FAMILY BUSINESS... JUST A BIGGER FAMILY

Flash forward 30 years and Mid-South is still a family business. That is how Alan Sallee, Jr., Senior Vice President of Sales sees it.

“Management treats employees with respect. We care about our people and their lives,” he says.

Sallee believes this is why the company has such great employee retention.

While the company dynamic is still the same, the business has grown and diversified. They provide coil for sheds, roofing, animal confinement, utility trailers, RVs, signs, and lighting. However, 50% of their sales are still in coil for gutters and downspouts.

Sallee says that he was able to grow his customer base because he knew the markets from working in distribution businesses previously. He knew how to talk to people in the industry and he understood how important relationships are. Relationship building has worked well for Mid-South; they have customers across the U.S.A.



*Alan Sallee Jr., Senior Vice President of Sales*

## THE UNDERPINNINGS OF GROWTH

The company is focused on supplying quality aluminum products and service. Mid-South supplies Just In Time delivery and caters to their customers, striving to provide whatever they want.

“If a customer needs something special, we’ll work with them,” Sallee said. “It’s all part of building that relationship.”

Besides having a customer service mindset, the company is able to provide this type of service because they are small, nimble, and able to make decisions in-house, avoiding delays that can occur in large companies with many layers.

They also maintain a strong inventory, which serves them well. However, it can’t compensate for every contingency.

In the last few years, the company felt the product shortages keenly. While the domestic supply was strained, business demand was strong. Unable to procure enough aluminum, they ended up buying tonnages offshore, securing enough to satisfy customer requirements.

## LOYAL CUSTOMERS

As market prices rose, Mid-South, like so many companies, was obliged to pass some of it along to customers because costs rose too quickly for them to be able to absorb it all.

Yet, despite all of these challenges, Sallee is proud to say that their loyal customers stuck with them and they, in turn, supplied their customers with 60 million pounds of aluminum annually.

## LIKE-MINDED COMPANIES MERGE INTO ONE

July 1, 2017, Mid-South Aluminum merged with Kripke Enterprises. The two companies have similar outlooks; both Sallee and Matt Kripke had companies they started with their dads and the families had done business together for many years. Knowing the Kripkes made the decision to sell his company easy, Sallee said.

Mid-South Aluminum retained its company identity through the merger; Kripke Enterprises is in the non-ferrous metal recycling business. However, the



merger has been helpful.

“Merging provided us with a bigger presence,” Sallee said. “Kripke also provided us with infrastructure we were lacking.”

### COMPANY CULTURE THAT FOSTERS RELATIONSHIPS

Sallee and his team conduct business based on three guidelines. In fact, they recite the guidelines at the beginning of every meeting to set the tone and keep their values in the forefront of their minds. They are:

1. We do what we say we are going to do.
2. Relationships are the backbones of business.
3. We provide solutions.

When you live these core values combined with a valued commodity,



The Mid-South Aluminum Team

the future looks promising. Sallee sees continued growth in the aluminum industry.

“The changing interest rates will

probably cause a downturn in residential projects,” he said, “but they haven’t created too many replacements for aluminum.” RF



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# Built Right Here in Spokane

At ASC Machine Tools, Quality Comes First!

## HISTORY

In 1949, ASC Machine Tools was founded in Spokane, Washington, as Aluminum Supply Company. Originally focused on producing corrugated aluminum barn siding and irrigation pipe for the burgeoning Columbia Basin agricultural market, the company has

since evolved into one of the world's leading roll-forming machinery and coil handling equipment suppliers.

## FROM SPOKANE TO THE WORLD

Today, ASC's product reach spans the globe. Building on a leadership position

in the Americas, the company has grown to an installed customer base in over 60 countries around the globe. Company headquarters are still in Spokane, Washington; ASC UK and ASC LATAM help support ASC's International Sales, Service and Manufacturing operations.

## PRODUCTS

ASC serves a diverse customer base in the metal construction industry; primarily focused on state-of-the-art manufacturing solutions for C/Z purlins, panel, trim, and decking production; while still serving their agricultural heritage with high-production grain bin roof, wall, and stiffener lines. The company also manufactures related coil handling equipment for the two-piece beverage can market; having been involved in that business since its inception in the 1960s.

## INNOVATION

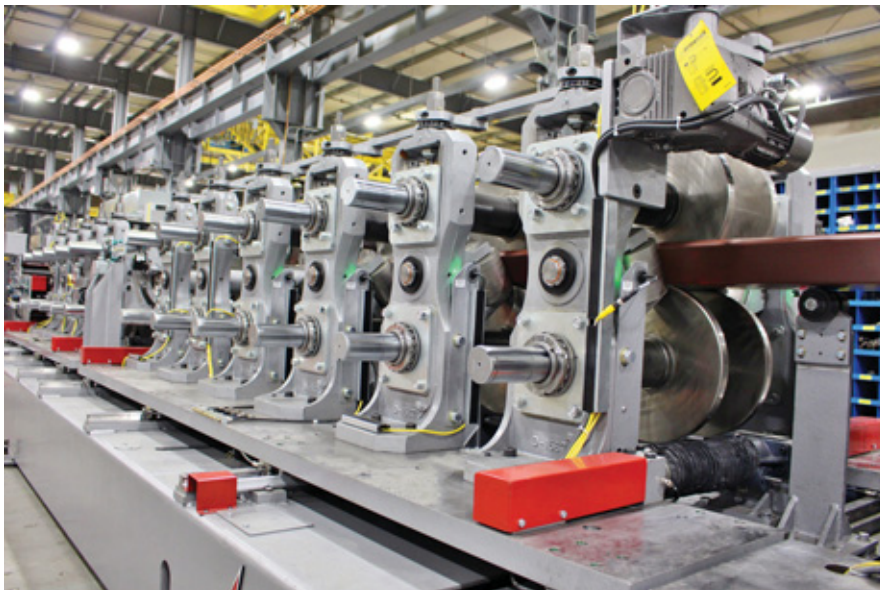
Innovation and product development has been the key to the company's growth. Listening to customer challenges and proposing innovative manufacturing solutions has driven growth over the past seven decades, most recently with the introduction of the TKR-X, the industry's most fully automated C/Z Purlin Line.

## SERVICE

With thousands of roll-forming lines in operation around the globe, ASC understands the need for rapid response service. The company maintains a dedicated customer service team, with in-house service advisors, experienced field service personnel, and a spare parts department with emergency response capability.



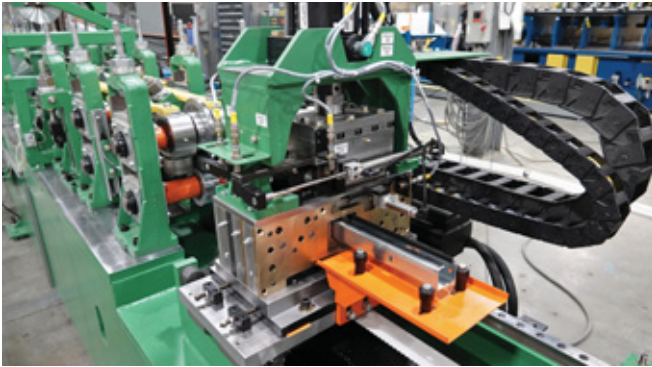
The ASC Sales Team at METALCON. PHOTOS COURTESY OF ASC MACHINE TOOLS, INC.



ASC TKR-X Purlin Rollformer

## EMPLOYEES

ASC is a great place to work and has employees who are experienced and quality-focused; many have worked together for over 20 years. The company's work environment fosters teamwork, with spontaneous pizza parties and barbecue lunches, with employees who enjoy each other's company.



ASC Machine Tools Track Rollforming Line

## PRIDE OF WORKMANSHIP

The company's number one focus is quality. It is a vertically integrated manufacturer, with in-house control over nearly every aspect of the design and manufacturing process. The company has established long-term relationships with raw material and component suppliers who support the philosophy that you can't beat the quality of a product made with pride by experienced workers here in America.

The products are designed in-house, just down the hall from the sales office, manufactured and tested in the next building over, and will be supported by the ASC service team in adjacent offices. This stability is a great benefit when helping a customer, salespeople are often immersed in the design process upfront with the customer and ASC engineers and can readily engage with the service and spare parts teams for after-sales support.

## KEYS TO SUCCESS

Customers like dealing with ASC because they provide quality equipment at a competitive price. They also support their customers before, during, and after the sale.

"We are always here when you need us," said Schwarzer, "74 years and counting." RF

## ASC Machine Tools Is Hiring

With growth comes opportunity. ASC Machine Tools is currently hiring in many disciplines, from entry level to degreed professionals for career-track office and manufacturing positions.

The company offers attractive wage and benefits. We are looking at adding more machinists and electrical engineers to our operations. ([applications@ascmachinetoolsinc.com](mailto:applications@ascmachinetoolsinc.com))



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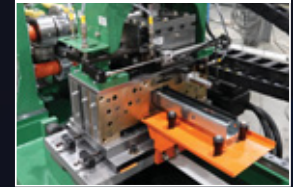
DECKING LINES



ROLL UP DOOR LINES



TRACK LINES



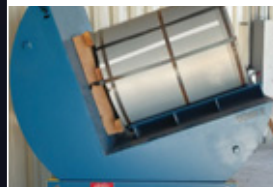
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# Investing in the Next Generation of Trade Leaders

■ By Rich Benninghoff, Malco Products, SBC

Two years ago, I joined Malco Products, SBC, and from my very first day, I was impressed with the company's commitment to the communities where the company operates and its dedication to supporting the next generation of technical and trade students.

It's not a secret that there is a nationwide shortage of hard-working women and men in the trades, that's why our company is proud to provide support for students pursuing these careers through a number of different initiatives.

As one of the nation's leading solution developers and manufacturers of a variety of high-quality tools for the building trades for more than 70 years,



we're in a position to not only provide tools so tradespeople can tackle their jobs effectively, but also to lean into encouraging future industry leaders.

Overall, every year Malco donates more than \$160,000 of in-kind products and apparel to a variety of skilled trade education programs, competitions and events across the country. This includes high school, post-secondary technical and apprenticeship programs, regional apprenticeship contests and SkillsUSA state and national conferences.

The tool manufacturer also coordinates its own national recognition program: the

“Head of the Class” Student Recognition Program for high-achieving students and entire graduating classes in the HVAC/ sheet metal, building construction and autobody repair fields.

Today more than ever, we understand and appreciate the growing need for and importance of qualified and skilled tradesmen and tradeswomen in our workforce. That's why I'm excited to share more about our legacy and new initiatives.

## SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES

Malco is based in Annandale, Minnesota, and has always been a strong supporter of our local community. Since our founding, it's been important to keep and create jobs in the United States and to make a positive impact in the communities where we operate — that is literally part of our mandate as a Specific Benefit Corporation (SBC) in the state of Minnesota.

In 2020, longtime associate and CFO Jeannette Rieger-Borer retired after 20 years at Malco. In her honor, Malco created the Jeannette Rieger-Borer Scholarship, which is awarded annually to local high school stu-

dents pursuing vocational or technical education training in one of the trades the company serves: HVAC, automotive or construction. We are proud that Jeannette was able to see the first student receive this honor in 2021 before she passed away in 2022, and we are humbled and proud to continue recognizing and sharing her legacy with this annual scholarship. We are excited to have a “hometown” students seeking this type of education and training each year.

A new program we established in 2022 is working alongside Habitat for Humanity. Last summer, Malco employees joined a

local Habitat for Humanity home build and our company also donated tools to Sartell-St. Stephen High School for future Habitat for Humanity projects throughout central Minnesota.

This community commitment is part of who we are as a company and has been formally established in our culture as part of our “Look Good, Feel Good, Do Good” initiative that also encourages employees to volunteer with causes that they are passionate about. We plan to continue to identify more opportunities to meaningfully support our local communities!

## HEAD OF THE CLASS

While we're proud of our local programs, our support of education and trade schools extends throughout the United States and Canada as well.

For nearly 20 years, the Malco Head of the Class Student Recognition Program has awarded outstanding graduating students from technical school, union Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees, and industry association career education programs across North America. The program launched in 2005, and since then has reached more than 85,000 students attending more than 1,000 programs focused on heating, ventilation & air conditioning, building construction and autobody repair.

We're proud of this program and how it's taken off and grown over the years. It comes at no cost to schools or educators, and truly makes an impact for these students as they start their careers.

The program is simple: educators can nominate an outstanding graduating student to receive a Malco tool gift with an average value of \$150, to help them start their careers with a set of high-quality tools. To date, the program has recognized more than 4,000 Head of the Class honorees.

We know that buying tools is often

a significant investment for trade professionals and can be a barrier for young professionals just getting started; helping students get a good start is important to us. Additionally, the entire graduating class at these schools receive a Malco cap.

Our hope is that this award program inspires up-and-coming construction pros across the U.S. to focus on completing high quality, safe work for their customers, and that they continue going above and beyond to ensure a job well done.

### SUPPORT OF SKILLSUSA

As part of our effort to support the national technical education community, last year, Malco provided \$19,500 in-kind donations to SkillsUSA State Association Sheet Metal Champions.

The SkillsUSA program gives students the opportunity to compete in trade con-

tests. We donated 36 Malco Backpack Tool Kits (\$18,000 in value) to students who won at the state level before heading to nationals.

We plan to continue supporting the important work that SkillsUSA does for the industry.

### SUPPORTING EDUCATORS, CELEBRATING STUDENTS

Malco was proud to return to the 2022 HVAC Excellence Show, also known as the National HVACR Education Conference, last March in Las Vegas. This show is the ultimate training experience for HVAC instructors to learn about new and emerging technologies, hear from industry leaders and exchange ideas with peers. We loved hearing from instructors and students who shared positive feedback about our Head of the Class program.

Every year Malco also exhibits at the

SkillsUSA TECHSPO and it's always a highlight for the team. It's an opportunity to meet educators and exceptional students as they compete in hands-on and leadership competitions.

Another way we support schools and students is by offering tool discounts to trade school instructors purchasing tools for the classroom, as well as students in trade programs who show their student ID.

As we look at the future, we're hopeful that many young, bright minds continue to pursue careers in the HVAC, automotive and construction industries. As a company, if we can play even a small role in making these careers possible for the next generation, we can be proud of our work. RF

*Rich Benninghoff is president and CEO of Malco Products, SBC.*



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Aaron Aumick, carpenter, firefighter



Carlyn McClelland, construction estimator

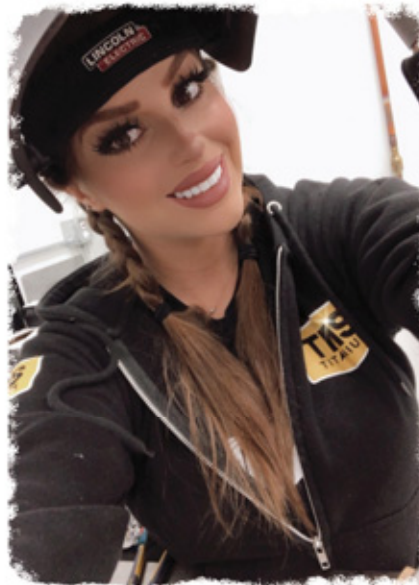
## From Dirty Jobs to the Work Ethic Crusade

■ By Rollforming Staff

If you know the name Mike Rowe, then you can probably picture the American producer and host knee-deep in some unknown, and undoubtedly dirty substance. During his 10-season tenure as the host of Dirty Jobs, Rowe played apprentice to dozens of blue-collar workers, where he developed a deep respect for the often forgotten and ridiculed “dirty” tradesman.

“The jobs he was working on were perceived as undesirable,” says Jade Estrada, VP of the mikeroweWORKS Foundation. “But the people he was working with were making good money; they were entrepreneurs. They were not necessarily following their passion, but they were bringing their passion with them in their work and succeeding.” These experiences led Rowe to launch the mikeroweWORKS Foundation in 2008 with the mission of improving the reputation of hard work and the trades.

The mikeroweWORKS Foundation looks to close the skills gap in this country by challenging the stereotypes and stigmas connected with the trades that discourage workers from pursuing a huge range of viable careers. Culturally



Chloe Hudson, welder



Victoria Knight, builder and remodeler

and in our education, the past couple generations of American workers have been led to believe that a four-year degree is the only path to success: that blue-collar work is for those who couldn’t make it to college, that it was “runner-up” work.

The main goal of the foundation is to let people know how absolutely wrong that is. “Tradespeople are not who you think they are,” says Estrada. “They are hardworking people, entrepreneurs, and trailblazers who have mastered a skill that’s in demand anywhere in the world.”

## WORK ETHIC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

A scholarship program developed naturally out of this campaign for hard work and skilled labor. If Rowe was going to educate students on the value of the trades, he also wanted to help hardworking students on that path. Since 2014, the mikeroweWORKS Foundation has awarded over 1,500 scholarships worth seven million dollars. “The majority of the people who apply are fresh out of high school,” says Estrada, “however, we



Zachary White, RHVAC



Jonathan Ota, cabinet maker



Brandon Noe, non-destructive engineer

have many applicants who are exploring the trades as a second career.”

As long as you meet the requirements, it doesn't matter what stage in life you are living. Along with typical scholarship requirements like a transcript, some essay questions, and references, you need to enroll in an approved program at a two-year school. Approved trades include

automotive and aviation technology, carpentry, construction, EMT, farming & agriculture, manufacturing, plumbing, and more. (A full list of guidelines and programs can be found at [mikeroweworks.org/scholarship](http://mikeroweworks.org/scholarship).)

More than anything else, applicants need to display their commitment to the four pillars of the S.W.E.A.T. Pledge:

work ethic, personal responsibility, delayed gratification, and a positive attitude. In 2020, nearly one million dollars in scholarships were awarded to more



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than 200 students all over the United States. At the time, that was the highest dollar amount awarded in one year in the program's history. In each successive year the foundation has given at least one million dollars and 2023 may see that benchmark doubled. "Mike is now the leading advocate of skilled trades in the U.S.," says Estrada. "The number of individuals involved and the visibility of the program have grown substantially."

### YOU'VE GOT TO BE WILLING TO S.W.E.A.T.

One of the core beliefs of the mikeroweWORKS Foundation is that working hard should be valued in our society. Out of that belief grew the S.W.E.A.T. Pledge, which stands for "Skills and Work Ethic Aren't Taboo." Rowe created this list of 12 belief statements to outline and exemplify the characteristics and world view he values in a worker. For example, here are a couple of the 12 statements:

- "#2. I believe that I am entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Nothing more. I also understand that "happiness" and "the pursuit of happiness" are not the same thing."
- "#7. I believe the best way to distinguish myself at work is to show up early, stay late, and cheerfully volunteer for every crappy task there is."
- "#12. I believe that all people are created equal. I also believe that all people make choices.

Some choose to be lazy. Some choose to sleep in. I choose to work my butt off."

Rowe readily acknowledges that the S.W.E.A.T. Pledge isn't for everyone, and may ruffle some feathers, but he strongly believes that the values displayed are what make a good work-



*Maria Ralph, construction and construction management*



*Nolee Anderson, trim carpenter*



*Rebecca Gregg, HVAC*

er. So much so, that every applicant for the scholarship program needs to sign a copy of the S.W.E.A.T. Pledge before they can be eligible.

An outcropping of the S.W.E.A.T. Pledge, after encouragement and support from partner companies, was the development of a work ethic curriculum built around the four pillars of the pledge: work ethic, personal responsibility, delayed gratification, and a positive attitude. "These are qualities any worker or student can benefit from embracing," says Estrada. "They will be useful for job satisfaction and success long-term no matter what profession you choose." A pilot program of 20 post-secondary schools took place in the fall of 2019? and the foundation is continuing to test the waters.

In the future, the mikeroweWORKS Foundation hopes to expand the work ethic curriculum to corporations, middle schools, and high schools. Helping kids understand all of the options that are open to them and helping working adults rediscover good work ethic are both future desires of the curriculum. Look for the curriculum's progress in the years to come. Coming to a school near you! [RF](#)



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# Service in the Digital Space

Steel supplier serves through customers' preferred interface



**App users can hand select their coils to build trucks.**  
PHOTO COURTESY OF MILL STEEL

**D**uring the METALCON Meet the Press event last October, Shield Wall Media had discussions with Mill Steel about the updates to its progressive online shopping experience. The updates keep coming and the level of service to customers continues to rise, so we thought it to be a good time to learn more about the features of the online service platform.

**Q What is the Mill Steel app? What does it do and on what platforms does it operate?**

**A** The Mill Steel App provides users access to Mill Steel's complete line of prime, excess, and secondary painted and acrylic inventories. Users can shop coils with real-time pricing, view order history, place an order for delivery or pickup, and bid on coils from the excess and secondary inventories. It provides offline functionality, automated notifications, and full-screen mode. The app can also be downloaded on the home screen of any device (phone, tablet or desktop), making it easily accessible.

The Mill Steel App works on any device, regardless of the operating system or screen size.

**Q When, how and why was the app developed?**

**A** The Mill Steel App was launched in June of 2020 to provide an easy online shopping option for today's busy

steel buyers. The goal of development was to make sourcing steel easy and convenient to help users save time and money running their businesses.

**Q What types of material can roll formers expect to find through the app at any given time?**

**A** App inventory includes full 24, 26, and 29-gauge SMP and paint to order material and acrylic. Sherwin-Williams WeatherXL, AkzoNobel, commodity polyesters, and custom color codes are all available on the app.

**Q How accurate is inventory listed in the app? How often does the inventory list change?**

**A** All inventory on the app is in real time, there is no lag in updates. What users see is an accurate representation of what is available for purchase.

**Q Explain the "bid" process.**

**A** Users can place bids for coils in our secondary or excess inventory. The bid is sent to our purchasing team. From there, the bid can be accepted or countered via email or by direct correspondence from a sales expert. If accepted and the user is a new customer, our finance team is notified to setup an account. If the user is already a Mill Steel customer, the order is processed at the accepted price.

**Q On any given day, how much inventory is listed on the app?**

**A** There is over 30,000 tons of inventory available at any given time.

**Q How does ordering through the app affect delivery times?**

**A** The app provides visibility on all details of the product up front, which helps eliminate the back-and-forth communication that sometimes comes with placing an order. Users can hand select their coils to build trucks, which improves efficiency in getting trucks scheduled and out the door.

Online orders receive the same level of service and quick

turnaround time as orders placed through phone, email or text.

**Q How long does it take for a new user to get set up?**

**A** Anyone can browse inventory as a “guest.” To transact and gain access to the full suite of features the app offers (i.e. saved filters and one-click reorders), there are some necessary business requirements that must be completed. Registering for an account can happen very quickly, depending on the readiness of the user (i.e. having credit references available).

If the user is already a customer of Mill Steel, they will need to create an online account at the point of purchase, which takes only a few minutes.

**Q How does the app affect direct interaction with Mill Steel staff?**

**A** Online orders are processed the same way as an order received through any traditional channels, like email or phone. The entire Mill Steel fulfillment team is behind each online order ensuring excellent customer service and quick delivery. There is a dedicated account manager for every customer that can be reached at any time to assist if needed.

**Q How do you see the app evolving? What challenges do you expect it to address on the horizon?**

**A** Mill Steel has a team of web developers on staff to continue

advancement of our digital platforms. Some new features slated for development later this year and early 2024 are:

- a more intuitive and robust search bar
- additional authorization levels for account customization
- additional processing notifications, such as alerts for when material is done being painted

We are constantly seeking feedback from online shoppers to help prioritize new feature development as well as changes to how the app currently functions.

We want to be where our customers are, and we see our customers continuing to grow in the digital space. **RF**

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# Automating Your Roll-Forming Business

Integration software an industry game changer

■ By Sharon Thatcher

The fourth industrial revolution (Industry 4.0) in the form of artificial intelligence (AI) has arrived in the roll-forming industry. What does it look like and how can your business benefit?

A simplistic explanation for what it is can be described as machine controls and related software that improves data collection and integration of all systems

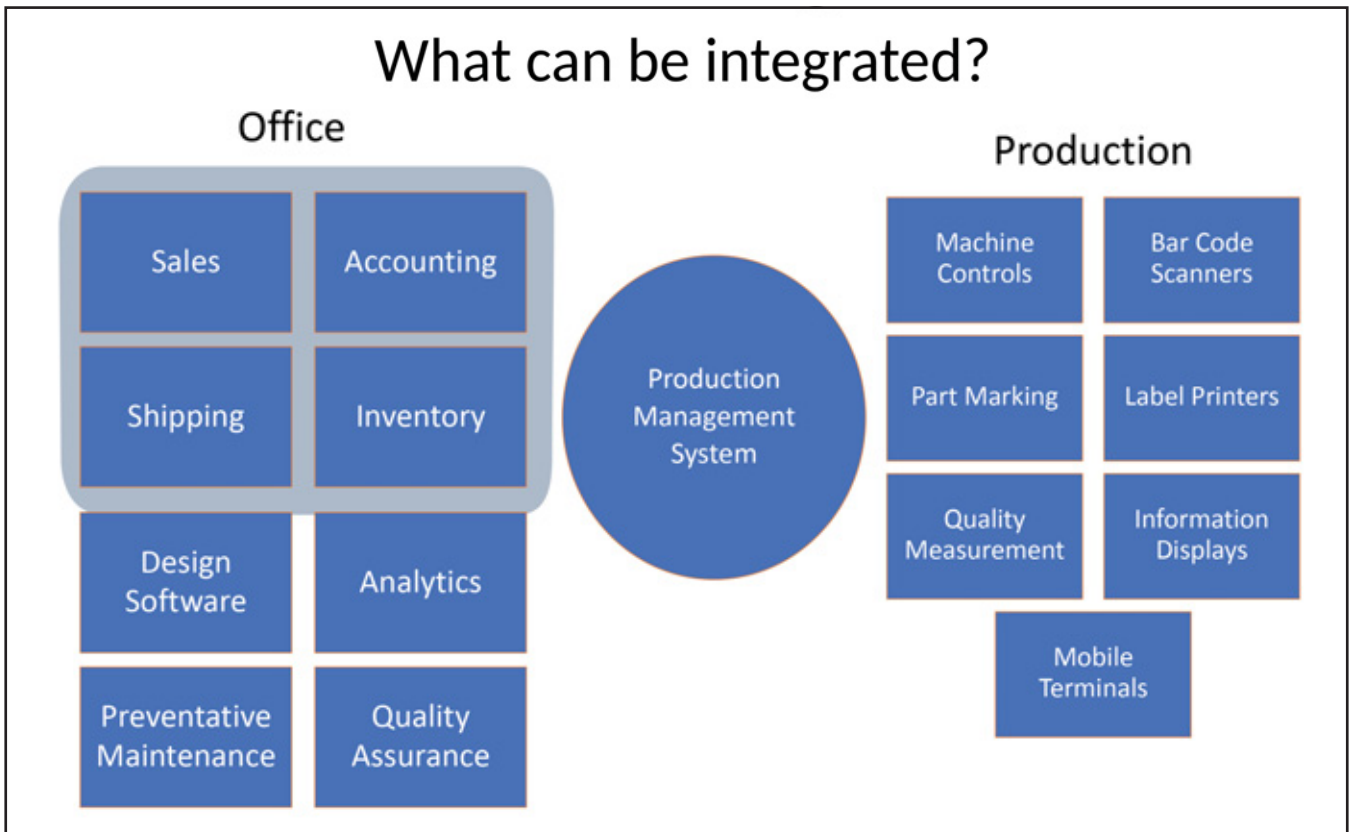
from shop to office. Huge advancements have been made in this arena, and many metal fabrication shops have already embraced it.

If you operate like many small- to mid-size shops, however, you have a hodge-podge of systems or wish to completely ignore Industry 4.0 automation entirely. While ignoring it may not be the best solution long term, Shawn Huffman,

Sales Manager at BECK Automation, assures you that options for how much to embrace it can vary. “There’s not a one size fits all,” he said. “It’s all going to depend on your business needs, the size of your company; the ultimate decision is up to you.”

There are basically three areas of automation in the roll-forming world:

- The controller (the physical controls



The basic integration options for software automation. COURTESY OF AMS CONTROLS

at the machine)

- Office software (to manage day-to-day business activities)
- Office-to-shop integration software (connecting the above).



**Shawn Huffman, Sales Manager, BECK Automation**

As National Sales Manager, Ryan King with CIDAN describes: “Trim parts are often still drawn on a napkin or piece of paper.”

It is certainly still a workable arrangement, however, it can also result in longer lead times and a higher likelihood of mistakes.”

Regional shops catering to the local market for metal roofing and wall panel, and related metal building components became popular for the ability to deliver product quickly. Now the definition of ‘quick’ is changing. “Every industry around us is becoming

like Amazon Prime,” King said. “If you can’t get it in two days on Amazon Prime—do I even want it now?”

Wayne Green, Eclipse Product Manager and Engineered Sales for AMS Controls, believes that the larger a company becomes, the need for accountability becomes greater. Staying manual through growth means quality will start to slide. “You can’t give everything the attention it needs,” he said. “There’s lots of things that fall into



**Ryan King, National Sales Manager, CIDAN**

the cracks. The accountability at all levels needs to get higher... And the higher the accountability, the higher the profitability you typically have.”

## THE CONTROLLER

Originally, roll-forming machines and folders came with very basic controllers, limited to allowing single batch programming. “The downside is that it doesn’t communicate with anything; the operator has to program [each job into the machine] one at a time,” Huffman described.

Many shops in the regional roll-forming world are still steadfastly dedicated to this basic, manual control.

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For shops wanting to expand and compete in a broader market, modern controllers allow the operator to program in multiple orders with easy-to-navigate color touch screens. They are also designed to interface via Ethernet to the office, and that's where automation truly shines. The physical controller can now network with robust software programs that can track product from input to output and even to delivery. Available in industry-specific systems called ERPs (enterprise resource planning) they can help you track the entire life of a single coil from the time it arrives at your shop to when the finished product is delivered to your customer. When used to its fullest extent, mistakes, waste, and angry customers are substantially minimized.



**Andy Allman, President,  
AMS Controls**

### SOFTWARE CHOICES

The metal components industry has many integrated manufacturing software options to choose from. Here is a partial list of those commonly used in the metal building components and panel world:

- Production (machine to office systems): Connex, Eclipse, nuIT, QB-Elite, MetalShop, Pathfinder Edge
- Industry-Specific Design: Applicad, SmartBuild, StrucSoft, Vertex
- Industry-Specific ERPs: Adjutant, Paradigm, RealSTEEL, SteelPro

With some systems you can pick and choose features à la carte, helping to reduce cost.

### What industry-dedicated integrated manufacturing can do

The most immediate advantage to all the above integrated manufacturing programs is the ability to capture useful data and to eliminate the need for double entry of orders.

In the traditional manual system, an

order is received in the office and the information carried down to the shop where the operator keys the information into the machine controller. As Huffman explained, it not only requires extra time to do that but “there’s opportunities for errors and there’s downtime associated with that.”

Integrated manufacturing systems allow you to send multiple orders directly to the machine controller from the office, making the information available simultaneously in both places. The operator can still enter orders if needed, but larger businesses are taking that task away from operators so more time can be spent on actual production. As AMS Controls President Andy Allman noted, it takes time to key in entry, and “if that’s happening at the machine control on the floor, that means the machine is not running.”

### Other important features of integrated manufacturing systems

#### Coil tracking and validation:

Each coil can be assigned and tagged with a unique code or number that can be tracked with a hand-held scanner. Immediately you can verify the gauge, width, and color. Does it match the material needed for that job?

It offers a look at where a coil was manufactured and how it is being used: what jobs it was used for, how much scrap was generated and the reasons for that scrap—was it bad coil or poor control over the run? If the latter, do you need to talk to your operator to change the way he’s running the machine, or do you need to call your vendor to tell them they’re sending you bad coil?

Good tracking leads to order validation, making sure you have the right materials for the job you are running. Running the wrong coil can be very expensive, as Wayne Green recalls from his former business experience. In his case, a color-blind employee, with an otherwise stellar work record, picked the wrong coil color for a job. “It was an order that had to get out the door quickly,” he said. The order ran in its entirety: a \$10,000 mistake.

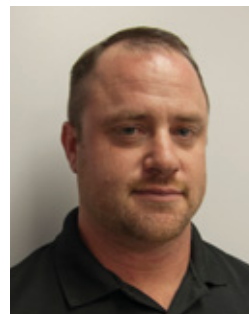
Such unintentional mistakes are common and could have been avoided with an integrated manufacturing system. Error warnings can be set up to coordinate with order information. When the coil on the machine doesn’t match the coil needed for the order, an error message pops up. Is this coil an approved substitute? Does it require a supervisor’s password to override the error and continue, or correct the error with new coil?

Green believes production management software integrated with machine controls not only benefits the business owner and customer, but also the employee. “It can take an employee with a handicap [in this case color blindness] and allow them to run at a high level.”

Production management software integrated with machine controls can also help you:

- track inventory (how much material is currently in inventory and what will be needed for upcoming jobs)
- maintain a proactive maintenance routine (listing all the things that need to be performed on this machine today and written or video how-to instructions)
- track employee production (When was the machine turned on and off, how much down time in between, and how was down time used?)

• track key performance indexes (What is the efficiency of the machine weekly, daily, hourly? If the machine is idle



**Wayne Green, Eclipse  
Product Manager and  
Engineered Sales, AMS  
Controls**

and orders are piling up, is it because the operator is busy with bundling and shipping tasks? If so, is it time to employ someone dedicated to bundling and shipping?)

- track shipping details (a barcode on a bundle tag can tell you this order needs to go on this truck, going on this route, and delivered by this date).

### The Value of QuickBooks

Not mentioned in the above list of integrated manufacturing software is QuickBooks, and yet it is a very popular choice in the regional roll-forming world for accounting. "It's a great program and a lot of customers use it. But it's not going to cover everything. [For manufacturing] QuickBooks is entry level," Shawn Huffman said. "There are things you're going to need that aren't in it."

Before taking a job with AMS Controls,

Wayne Green owned his own metal shop. He said of QuickBooks: "QuickBooks definitely gets you out of the gate; it does accounting extremely well, but it doesn't do the manufacturing side of roll forming, the equipment operations ... QuickBooks needs a lot of workarounds to make it effective."

As your business grows, you should consider stepping up to more industry-specific software options.

### Andon Boards

For more advanced shops, Andon boards on the shop floor allow employees to see real-time performance metrics and other helpful information relevant to their machine: what order is up next, when coil or maintenance changes are scheduled. Monitors need not be expensive: a new smart TV from your favorite box store serves the purpose. Allman

said the information they provide is "like having a manager on site at the line at all points."

Controlled from the office, production output can also be displayed. Green thinks younger generations of workers adapt particularly well to this type of feedback. "Sometimes this is the first time they've come from gaming and high school into the real world," he noted. "They relate to data feedback particularly well... It's a psychological effect that if you give an operator their stats, most people will want to do better."

### If integrated manufacturing is so great, why are many regional roll formers reluctant to embrace it?

Reluctance to change is the easy answer, but Ryan King offers another explanation. "It's a blessing and a curse that everyone has been very busy; you

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## Product Feature))



Andon boards are a simple way to help keep employees on task and informed of job progress.  
AMS CONTROLS PHOTO

don't care if you're losing 2% if your business is up 20%. When you're slower is when you need to reassess and re-evaluate your operation. Right now, I'm busy, busy, busy; I just need to get this out the door."

Shop owners also may not readily understand the benefit. "When you buy a machine, your ROI is very big and measurable," King said. "You went from buying materials from someone else to making them in-house. When you do that, you're going to see an actual, easily measured ROI. When it comes to software it's more difficult to measure, but you will save time and material once implemented."

He said one way to look at integrated manufacturing: "It's like buying a new car vs. a used car with lots of miles on it. Both get you to the same place, but one is more efficient in how it does it."




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Some companies that are embracing it are doing so out of workforce concerns. Older workers are aging out and younger workers are hard to entice. King said one of CIDAN's machine models "can now efficiently and accurately do the work of 3 or 4 people, and all [the operator] is doing is setting a stack of material on a table and then collecting the finished parts."

He added: "We're selling more machines like this because of labor shortages and people needing to be more efficient. No one is buying this machine to lay off five people. They're buying this to take the people they do have and have them doing more and working less."

**Is integrated manufacturing software worth the extra expense?**

The direct, financial benefits are readily apparent in terms of streamlining

data entry and tracking inventory, but Andy Allman said some of its greatest benefits are less apparent in the data it collects. "Regardless of which system you use," he said, "integrated manufacturing helps you manage your workforce, tracks where your bottlenecks are, and where you need to invest next."

If used as designed, he went on to explain, "the information you collect can be gold ... [companies are realizing] amazing financial results from just understanding what is happening in reality on these machines. It can really have a huge impact on how they train their operators, how they spend capital, what was their best investment ... It's a tool that offers information you can act on."

Wayne Green said the financial payback is sooner than what you might think: "What I've typically seen is ROI on

investment, just from order download, is less than 6 months for someone running orders 8 hours a day 5 days a week. That extra 45 minutes to an hour that we are giving them back pays for the integration within six months typically speaking."

You won't be able to ignore its impacts on the industry indefinitely. Said Ryan King: "If you want to grow and play with the medium and big boys you won't have a choice eventually. I think [automation] eventually becomes as important as buying the machine. As an industry, we're not quite there yet but I think in the next 5-10 years we'll see a great percentage of people using software other than what's just on the machine." RF



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# Common Q&A's about Integrated Manufacturing

**T**oday's machine controls offer cutting-edge opportunities for increasing efficiency and production through automation.

## What are the advantages of integrated manufacturing for trim production?

Integrated manufacturing is useful for roll-forming machines, but nowhere is it more effective than at the double folder.

Ryan King, National Sales Manager, CIDAN compares manual with integrated manufacturing: "If I told you to make something with a manual folder you would have to take out a tape measure, you'd have to have a protractor to measure your angles," he said. With integrated manufacturing "the computer does

all that. You tell the computer to bend a 90-degree angle and [the folder] bends a 90-degree angle."

Said Andy Allman, President, AMS Controls: "The computer is doing what computers are generally good at: it's looking at all the possibilities, it's evaluating, it's looking for solutions that even an experienced operator may not have thought of."

Leftover panels and sheets often stay on the floor, King has seen. "You may as well put it in the trash because it's going to get damaged, scratched, or put in a pile for three years until one day the owner comes out and says, 'man what are we doing with all this stuff? Just throw it away.' Efficiency and planning on the

front end will reduce this kind of waste."

Creating cut lists that take into consideration the least amount of waste is a talent that a skilled operator learns over many years. "The more bends there are to a part, the number of possible ways of doing it goes up more than exponentially," Allman noted.

For a computer the learning curve is seconds.

## Can you breathe new life into an older machine with a modern controller?

Yes, a modern controller can benefit an older machine and it is a common upgrade.

"We've had some cases where people have their third or fourth generation control on the same machine ... typically these machines are well made and will last a long time. And yes, an upgraded controller can help overall performance," according to Allman.

A caveat, however, that if you want to invest in an upgrade on an aging machine, you should have a plan in the event of a machine breakdown. Do you have ready access to physical parts? "In our world today, we have several components that are 8 to 10 months lead times: motors, drives, servos," Allman said. Investing in a highly computerized system doesn't help if you can't run the machine.

## Can a new controller increase the speed of a machine?

"Yes, depending on what you are starting with," said Allman. "Folding machines in particular, there's a lot you can do with the controls that can make the machine much, much faster."

But automation to move machines faster isn't always the answer, it's about



moving production efficiently. Allman offered an example of an AMS customer that wanted more machine speed only to realize it wasn't feasible because their packaging speed couldn't keep up.

King, who sells machines for CIDAN, offered this: "People get caught up too much in the machine and not enough in the software and processes. They look at the machine — and as someone who sells them, I'm not complaining — but in the process there's a lot more to figure out. You can have the most efficient, fastest machines in the world, but if it's not a part of a process, it's going to be a lot of money spent to not take full advantage of your investment." RF

**Sharon Thatcher** is the former managing editor of *Rollforming Magazine*. She is now an independent writer living in Ohio.

## How automation is being developed

Manufacturers have been using automation for a couple decades to improve equipment. Andy Allman, President of AMS Controls, is one of the engineers that has contributed to the science through a combination of hardware and software solutions for the double folder.

The result of four years of development at AMS in the mid-2010s was the successful integration of controls and hydraulic servo valves leading to the Hyperdrive upgrade package. The Hyperdrive can double the speed of most double folders.

"Through video analysis of existing double folders in operation, we realized it would be possible to make big increases in production rates simply by improving the coordination between the various machine

elements," Allman explained, "however, it quickly became obvious that we would need to upgrade the hydraulics to a high-performance servo design to really get these machines running at their full potential.

"Multi-axis servo hydraulics was an area we hadn't dealt with," Allman continued. "When you have many different hydraulics axes all moving simultaneously, a lot of things have to happen and happen very fast."

They used high speed cameras and scopes to try and capture what was going on "but it was just too much happening at one time," he noted. More advanced technology helped them to track hundreds of variables at a rate of a thousand times per second, "so we can see by the millisecond what's different."

That information was hiked up to a cloud database where it was analyzed. "It's an incredibly important feature in the development of a control system to see what's exactly happening," he said.

Today that information remains useful. As problems arise within a machine, "we can go back and pull diagnostics and find what might have caused that," Allman said.

The benefits can't be understated. "From a maintenance point of view, it's been very important in getting a machine back up and operating quickly," he added. "It's also helpful from a product side: you can see how machines are operating and it gives us ideas on making improvements. I think you'll see more and more of that going into future development." RF

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AceClamp.....	435	.....	309	Petersen - PAC-CLAD.....	204
Acu-Form.....	308	Grabr Post Buildings Inc.....	326	PLYCO Corporation / East Coast Fasteners	.....
AJ Manufacturing Inc.....	527	Greenpoint Metals Inc.....	100	.....	221
AkzoNobel.....	330	Hershey's Metal Meister.....	401	Presto Tape.....	105
AmeriLux International.....	320	Hixwood Metal Inc.....	226	Progressive Metals.....	201
Ameripak Inc.....	230	Integrity Sales & Service/Dyna-Cut.....	514	Red Dot Products, LLC.....	421
AMS Controls.....	416	Lakeside Construction Fasteners.....	202	Rollforming Magazine.....	335
ASC Machine Tools, Inc.....	411	Levi's Building Components.....	208	SmartBuild LLC.....	314
Beck Automation, LLC.....	427	Liberty Steel Products.....	115	Snap-Z.....	511
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## TESTIMONIALS FROM THE SHOW!

*"The CRS was a well attended two day event. Graber Post connected with many end users that were searching for suppliers in the metal industry. We are looking forward to an even better show in 2023!"*

**-Trent Wagler, Graber Post**

*"At SmartBuild, we offer software for the Metal Roofing, Post Frame, and All Metal Building markets. That being the case, we found the Construction Rollforming Show to be a show that perfectly targets companies we want to be in contact with. Our software addresses the top three markets that nearly all Metal Panel Manufacturers pursue. Almost every attendee we talk to at this show is automatically a highly qualified lead."*

**-Keith Dietzen, SmartBuild Systems**

*"We, as a company, thoroughly enjoy exhibiting at and look forward to the CRS show each year. We have always been treated as family and love the traffic and exposure it has brought to our company. So, if you are looking for a way to revolutionize your trim shop with a Variobend folder or our Slinet slitter line, come see us at CRS this year. And if you're looking for your own exposure, come see us at CRS this year."*

**-Zach Harvey, Hershey's The Metal Meister**



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# Service from South Carolina

Pro Cut Metals keeping high standards while building on opportunities

■ By Karen Knapstein



**South Carolina-based Pro Cut Metals' top priorities are providing customers with quality materials and services.**  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF PRO CUT METALS, WWW.PROCUTMETAL.COM.



**P**ro Cut Metals was founded to provide high quality metal components at a fair price. The business was launched in April 2021, in the midst of the COVID pandemic.

Andre Yoder, who co-owns the Easley, South Carolina, business with his dad, already had experience in building supply and metal forming businesses, so the company launched successfully and has been growing steadily since.

There's plenty of competition in the area. Andre established the business on a foundation of quality products and excellent customer service. Keeping their commitments and following up on promises is a top priority. He says customers need roll formers that do what they say they'll do, follow up on promises, and provide great service.

## GETTING STARTED

Andre explains that while Pro Cut Metals is new, it wasn't started without experience. His dad owns and operates two sister companies: a truss-making plant and a building supply store. The roll-forming business is a natural fit with the family's other businesses.

"We purchased an existing roll-forming company," he explains. The roll-forming company was very small and rolled metal primarily for themselves and a small group of outside customers. "They had the machinery and were willing to sell so we bought that machinery and we were able to take over the business name and rights."

Andre added new folders to the equipment lineup, making sure he had all the necessary equipment to make the components. And made sure he knew how to use it by getting a lot of training; he even worked in someone else's shop. "I have friends who owned a shop down in Georgia and they let me work down there. I might not know how to run the equipment the best way," he muses, "but every one of our guys who operates the equipment does."

## MEETING CUSTOMERS' NEEDS

Between the purchased roll forming company's customers and the customers

from Pro Cut Metals’ sister companies, PCM was able to launch with a large enough customer base to get the company going — “and it grew from there.” Currently, their largest customer segment is roofers. The company offers PBR, standing seam, and Tough Rib. The PBR and Tough Rib are made on a Metal Rollforming Systems double-deck roll forming machine.

They also offer three types of standing seam panels: Snap lock, mechanically seamed, and nail strip standing seam. When making panels on the jobsite, they use a portable Schleich Quadro machine, which is transported in a custom trailer.

Their commercial PBR panel with four 1 1/4” ribs is most commonly made in 26 ga. “Tough Rib is most commonly 29 ga. but we can do 29 and 26 ga.” Tough Rib panels have five 3/4” high ribs. To meet customers’ needs, both PBR and Tough Rib panels can be rolled in custom lengths from 3’ to 45’ long.



The Pro Cut Metals retail store offers the supplies and tools metal roofers need to get the job done.

“We really push the best quality,” emphasizes Andre. “Most often we use 24 ga. with Kynar for the standing seam, but offer select SMP colors in 26 ga.” (SMP and Kynar coatings are from Sherwin-Williams Coil Coatings.)

“We also make all the associated trims and accessories that go with those

panels,” he offers. Trims are made with folders and roll formers. In addition to the Schleich Quadro portable and the MRS stationary roll formers, they also have a Schechl shear and a Schleich slitter line.

They added a new 20’ Bradbury folder and a 20’ Joerns folder, giving them the



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## The Way We Roll ))

ability to fold trims up to 20' long. "We mainly fold most of our trim and are able to fold it to what the customer needs and wants. Every job is unique and every job may need a unique profile for eaves or gables. We're kind of able to draw that up and fold it to whatever the customer needs in profiles and lengths."

### BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES

Last year, 2022, was Pro Cut Metals' first full year in operation. "We experienced a lot of growth and have a lot of optimism for 2023. There are more customers that we can still reach out to and service well," Andre says.

To better serve their builder customers, in January 2023 Pro Cut Metals began putting together complete post-frame packages. "With partnerships with our sister companies, we're doing full post-frame packages. We do the framing material, the wood or steel trusses – everything that's needed in a post-frame package." They will sell the packages to builders or even work with independent contractors, subbing out the labor if a customer wants a turnkey package.

He observes, "Barndominiums are becoming popular in our area. We manufacture our own trusses so we're able to provide them at an even more competitive price. We manufacture our own steel components and put the packages together. We have good partnerships with builders, as well, to bring a lot of different things to the table with what we provide."

Andre attributes the growth in popularity of barndominiums to both economic and aesthetic factors. "If done correctly, framing [a post-frame home] is cheaper than a conventionally framed house. People like that it's new. It can be harder to get loans, but people have been able to find ways to make it work in our area."

Andre reports a lot of other building opportunities in their area, including agricultural storage and residential garages. "Farms need sheds and hay barns, so we get a lot of requests for those."



*A Schleich Quadro portable roll former is used to make standing seam panels on the jobsite.*



*Pro Cut Metals has the ability to fold trims up to 20' long.*

Pro Cut Metals owns their own delivery trucks and currently serves customers within a two- to three-hour radius. "We do go four hours away for some customers if it makes sense." Factors impacting delivery areas include delivery routes and whether or not the distance will affect their quality of service.

### STAYING FOCUSED

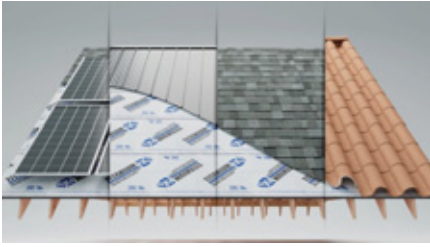
When the roll-forming shop started up in 2021 under Andre's ownership, they had about eight employees. They now have 18, which is more than 100% growth in 2 years. Andre recognizes and appreciates how his employees have made the success and growth of his company possible. "Your employees make up what

the business is," he states. "We have a great work culture. Our employees take ownership and pride in what they do." With that it doesn't all fall on Andre to make sure it all gets done correctly. "We have great people that get the job done correctly."

Andre spells out their biggest factor for success: "We operate all of our companies (the metal shop, truss plant and supply store) using excellent business standards. We give 110% and keep working until we're the best in our sphere of influence. Once we're the best, then maybe we can expand. But we'll keep working to be the best. The moment we stop working on that, that's the moment that someone else surpasses us." RF



## New Products ))



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efforts, Titanium® FR High Temp and Fire Resistant Self-Adhered Underlayment feature Sure-Foot® technology to support walkability in wet and dry conditions. The new underlayment also features a specially engineered self-adhesive layer to allow repositioning for easy installation on the roof.

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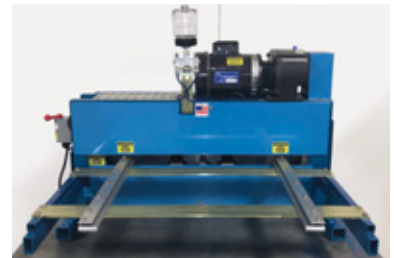
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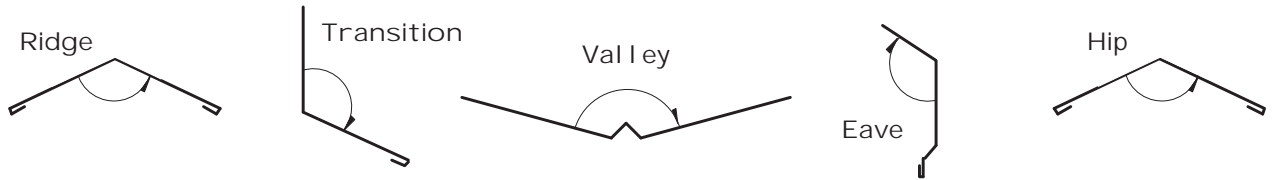
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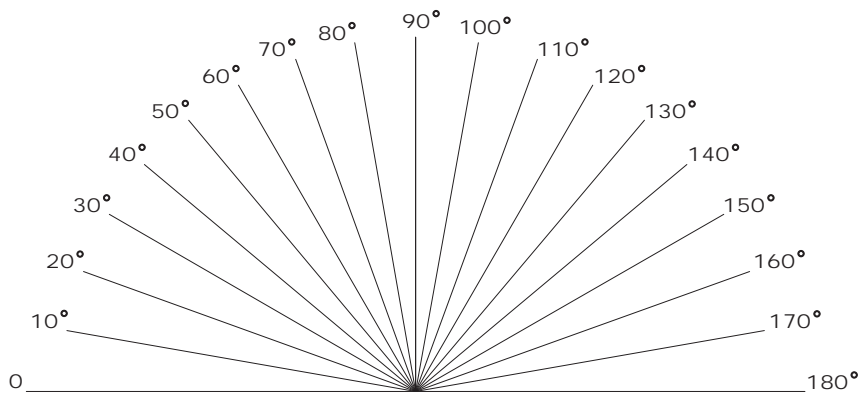
# Angle Calculator

## Application

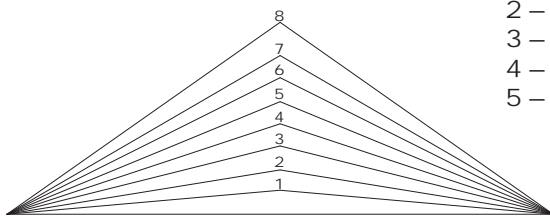


## Roof Slope

	1:12	2:12	3:12	4:12	5:12	6:12	7:12	8:12	9:12	10:12	11:12	12:12
Hip & Valley	173°	166°	160°	154°	148°	143°	138°	133°	129°	126°	123°	120°
Ridge	170°	161°	152°	143°	135°	127°	120°	113°	106°	100°	95°	90°
Eave & Transition	94°	99°	104°	108°	112°	116°	120°	123°	126°	129°	132°	135°

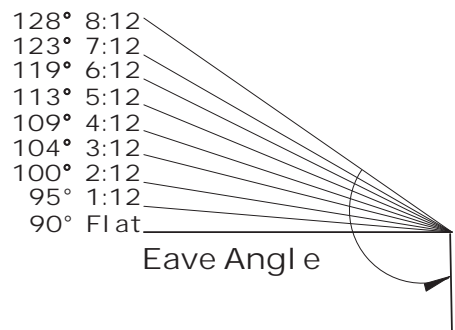


- 1 – Dimension each segment
- 2 – Label degrees of each angle
- 3 – Use degrees on the inside of the angle from line
- 4 – Indicate painted side with an arrow
- 5 – Cost is calculated by total girth



### Ridge Angle

- 1:12 – 170°
- 2:12 – 161°
- 3:12 – 152°
- 4:12 – 143°
- 5:12 – 135°
- 6:12 – 127°
- 7:12 – 120°
- 8:12 – 113°



### Eave Angle

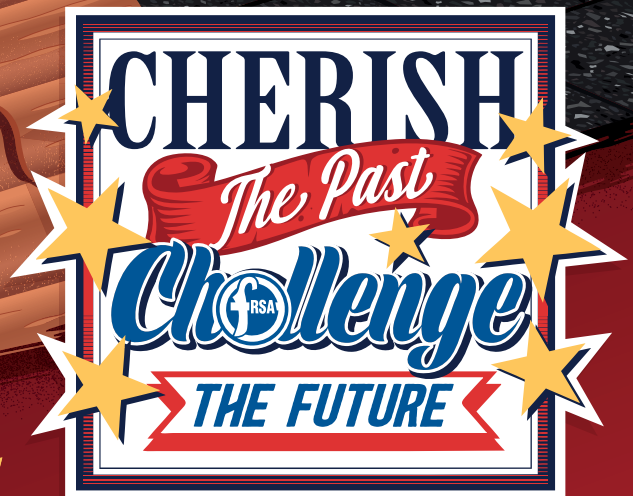
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**Matthew Wilson, Coil Sales Representative, Hixwood.**

### HIXWOOD ADDS COIL SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Hixwood, an Ambassador Supply company, has added a coil sales representative to its staff. Matthew Wilson has joined the company and works from a home base in Pennsylvania. He has more than 7 years of metal panel sales experience and now has set his sights on serving the metal coil needs of customers in the Northeast, including Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

In his new role, Matt says he “plans to grow Hixwood’s presence in the Northeast and help roll forming businesses grow by supplying them with quality coil and accessories.”

He was drawn to Hixwood because of the people. “Everyone I have met at Hixwood prior to and now, since working here, have been amazing! Everyone shares strong similar morals and values. They offer quality products and care about their employees and customers.”

Hixwood’s Paul Zimmerman is happy to have Matt aboard. “We are both fortunate and excited to have Matthew Wilson join our team. Matt brings us great industry experience, positive can-do attitude that will bring our customer service to the next level.”

Matt brings his excitement and an ongoing passion for the industry with him to Hixwood. “We’re involved in a very special industry,” Matt says

enthusiastically. “I couldn’t imagine myself in any other industry. The relationships I’ve made over the years will impact my life forever. I love what I do and look forward to each day I get to do it.”



**Maze Nails’ first delivery truck: a 1923 “Federal.” Photo courtesy of Maze Nails**

### MAZE NAILS MARKS 175-YEAR MILESTONE

Just 30 years after Illinois became a state, Samuel Maze started his lumber company along the Illinois River. It eventually grew to include making the nation’s largest selection of Specialty Nails.

To this day, Maze’s company is still going strong. Maze Lumber is the state’s oldest lumberyard, Samuel’s great-great-grandson, Roelif Loveland is president of Maze Nails, and Maze Company proudly celebrates its 175th anniversary this year.

“We have been blessed with many generations of great associates — both non-family and family employees,” Loveland said. “A huge part of longevity is having quality people....and the other part is having quality products that are continually demanded in the marketplace.”

“As my brother, Jim, said on the anniversary of his 150-year-old home in Spring Valley, Illinois, we are all simply caretakers of old businesses and old houses. It is our job to nurture them and make certain that they survive for the next generation. I am very proud to be spending my years doing exactly that.”

He also said he is impressed by his ancestors’ ingenuity, which set up Maze Nails for longevity.

“It seems like entrepreneurship was the rule rather than the exception back in those days,” Loveland said. “Family

owned and operated store fronts and small businesses sprang up everywhere. The Maze boys were pretty clever fellows and built a very strong business for future generations.”

Over the years, Loveland said there have been steady changes to the family business.

For example, Loveland said nails were once made entirely of zinc purchased from Illinois Zinc and M & H Zinc, but in 1916 nails started to be made of steel and dipped in zinc.

That was done by hand at first, but in 1955, Loveland said brothers, James and Hamilton Maze, designed a dipping machine to do the work.

“The only thing that has stayed the same is that both types of nails were highly dependable and became demanded by contractors nationwide,” Loveland said.

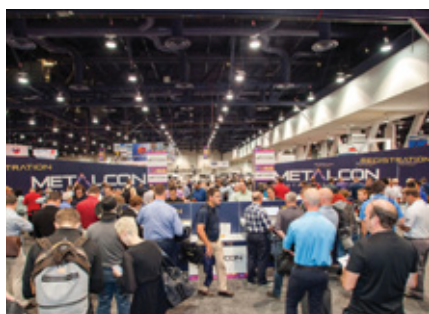
And with 175 years in the rearview, Loveland said things will continue to evolve. “We continue to change with the times, including updating the products we handle at Maze Lumber and developing new nails that we manufacture and sell at the Maze Nail factory. We’re now looking forward to our bicentennial year!”

### REGISTRATION OPENS FOR METALCON 2023

Registration is now open for METALCON 2023. This year’s conference and tradeshow takes place at the Las Vegas Convention Center from Wednesday, Oct. 18-Friday, Oct. 20, 2023, with pre-show workshops beginning on Tuesday, Oct. 17.

Industry experts will present key topics in the show’s highly-rated, education program and companies representing the entire spectrum of metal in construction will showcase the latest products, solutions and game-changing technologies covering everything from A to Z: accessories; building systems; coatings; construction technology; contractor tools; doors; fasteners; fenestration; framing; in-plant





**METALCON returns to the Las Vegas Convention Center October 18-20, 2023.**  
PHOTO COURTESY OF METALCON/PSMJ INC.

accessories; insulated metal panels; interior metal products; manufacturing equipment; ornamental/ custom fabrication; metal roofing; rooftop products; solar; substrate material and walls.

New for 2023 is the METALCON Training Zone centrally located on the

show floor and sponsored by Sherwin-Williams. Led by John Sheridan of Sheridan Metal Resources and his team of experts, the training zone will provide hands-on training featuring demonstrations and education (both in English and in Spanish) using a variety of mock-ups and materials including painted steel, aluminum, zinc, copper and other exotic materials. Training will focus on proper detailing and utilization of the right tools to enhance the skills of contractors, remodelers and others, enabling them to deliver their best, most efficient and cleanest work when installing various metal roof offerings and systems.

Also new this year is a Mergers & Acquisitions Essentials Workshop presented by PSMJ Inc. Resources expert Karl Wolker. Interested in growing your

business through acquisition, but aren't sure where to start? Could merging or selling your business be the perfect exit strategy for preserving your hard-won equity and legacy? Geared toward business owners and executives, this foundational workshop will cover the core principles driving the most successful transactions. Participants will learn the latest strategies for finding the right M&A counterparty, structuring win-win transactions, assessing valuations, successfully integrating and more!

"We are excited to return to Las Vegas for our sixth time," said Judy Geller, METALCON Show Director. "It is always a big hit for attendees, and we are excited about this year's new programming. We have a solid line-up of educational sessions from industry-related topics to overall A/E/C business advice." RF

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**RF JUNE/JULY 2023**

# Planning to Expand

One interesting aspect of the numbers is the expansion plans for Rollforming Magazine subscribers. When immediate and future expansion plans are combined, several categories reach 78-80% (primary for metal roof and metal building; participate for gutters) and all are 60%+. Of the categories in the 78-80% range, Rollforming subscribers are 6% or more above the others to have immediate expansion plans and 8% above all respondents.

43% of responding Rollforming Magazine subscribers are adding metal forming equipment. [RF](#)

*If you like the CSI columns or find the information useful, help us help you. Shield Wall media sends a State of the Industry Survey in fall and a mid-year State of the Industry Survey in Spring.*

*Please complete the survey and share it with your colleagues. A larger survey sample generates more reliable information.*

Percentage of Respondents Planning Expansions	In 2023	In Future
All respondents	19%	50%
Primary Metal Roofing	21%	59%
Primary Metal Building	21%	59%
Primary Post-Frame	21%	39%
Participate Metal Roofing	23%	52%
Participate Metal Building	24%	53%
Participate Post-Frame	21%	46%
Participate Gutters	30%	48%
Rollforming Subscribers	27%	52%

Percentage of Respondents Planning Expansions By Market Segments	In 2023	In Future
Residential-single family as primary	20%	47%
Residential-multi-family as primary	0%	83%
Agricultural as primary	30%	33%
Commercial as primary	15%	56%
Participate in residential, single-family	22%	53%
Participate in residential multi-family	17%	68%
Participate in agricultural	24%	49%
Participate in commercial	23%	54%

Planned Areas of Expansion	Subscribers	Participate Metal Roofing	Participate Metal Building	Participate Post-Frame	Participate Gutters
Employees – construction	20%	30%	29%	36%	31%
Employees – support	57%	53%	48%	45%	54%
Metal Forming Equipment	43%	33%	38%	26%	31%
Other Manufacturing Equipment	45%	33%	36%	28%	35%
Trucks	22%	27%	25%	36%	23%
Material Handling Equipment	22%	19%	22%	19%	27%



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