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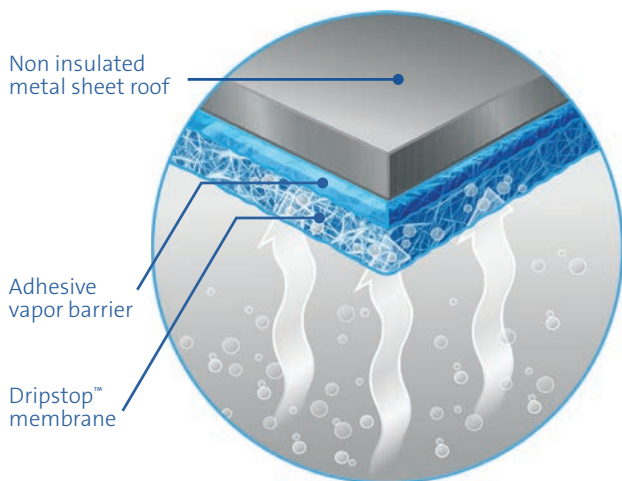
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# Data Supports Change

**I**try to avoid publisher's letters when possible. Sometimes they are unavoidable because there is so much going on. In November, we added audio to our magazine websites, so you can listen to the articles. The next step is our content will be listed in podcasts on Apple, Spotify, YouTube and other locations. Where video is available, you will see the magazine pages so you will see pictures, graphics and the display ads within the print version of that article.

When you read this, the 2024-2025 CSI Survey will be closed and we will be working on the *2025 CSI-Annual & Market Report*. The objective of the CSI is to provide actionable business data. Sometimes we use our proprietary data to make strategic

decisions for our magazines and shows. We are making a huge change to the Garage, Shed & Carport Builder Show for 2026.

The 2026 show will be in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, on January 20-21, 2026.

We partner our magazines and shows: The Construction Rollforming Show is partnered with *Rollforming Magazine*. The Post-Frame Builder Show is partnered with *Frame Building News*.

One of our 2026 shows will be two shows in one. The Rural Builder Show, which will be partnered with *Rural Builder* magazine. And, the Garage, Shed & Carport Builder Show is partnered with its namesake magazine. The logo and branding will change to the Rural Builder & Shed Show.

A significant number of Rural Builder subscribers report that they also build sheds and portable buildings (53%). Many companies building with post frame or metal frame include sheds and/or portable buildings in their portfolio.

Combining the shows will benefit both exhibitors and attendees. Exhibitors and attendees will gain access to a larger and more varied spectrum of potential customers while we maintain the quality and value for everyone.

The data we analyzed regarding who builds what type of construction is detailed in the CSI column on page 51 in this magazine.

Have a fantastic 2025.

— Gary Reichert, Publisher

## Editor's Note ))

# Let's Make 2025 a Great Year

**L**ike many people, I tend to get somewhat nostalgic around the holidays. This year is no different. As I write this, I'm thinking about our 2025 editorial plans, special projects, and Shield Wall Media's upcoming shows, among other things.

By the time you read this, we'll have wrapped the 2025 Garage, Shed & Carport Builder Show in Greenville, South Carolina. I'm looking forward to traveling to that show because it's far warmer there than it is here in Central Wisconsin. But I'm looking forward even more to traveling to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in June for the Post-Frame Builder Show. I've only been to Pennsylvania once (for METALCON 2019) and found it to be

absolutely beautiful. Plus, I've heard wonderful things about Lancaster County.

As you know, our trade shows are not only about the destination. Their main purpose is to connect businesses. We aim to connect manufacturers, suppliers and service providers with their customers. I enjoy helping people make those connections because I know it helps everyone involved solve challenges and build on their successes. I'm honored to be able to be a part of that process.

For years, I've avoided using the word "great." I struggled with it because it's a vague word. When I hear someone use it, I have to give more thought than usual about what they might mean. Do they mean large, awesome, powerful, or some other "mag-

nificent" synonym? (Enough wordplay!)

When I use the word "great" here, I mean "all of those things that it can mean." Let's do what we can to make new or stronger connections in 2025; let's adapt better processes; let's become more efficient. Let's take advantage of all those opportunities that are offered to us to better serve our clients' or customers' needs. I promise you this: I'll be doing my best to serve your information needs in 2025.

Until next time — be well.

— Karen Knapstein, Editor

*PS: If you would like to know if you can grow your business at any of our shows, contact show director Missy Beyer at 920-216-3007 or [missy@shieldwallmedia.com](mailto:missy@shieldwallmedia.com).*

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

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### On The Cover:

The Stolarczyk Coil Processing Solution from MetalForming LLC won a Top Product Award at METALCON 2024. Photo courtesy of MetalForming LLC

# Steel Market Update

Courtesy of Majestic Steel USA

Each week, Majestic Steel USA [majesticsteel.com], a steel service center that distributes prime, flat-rolled galvanized steel sheets and coils to industries across the United States, compiles the Core Report. The Report is “an in-depth look at key indicators and trends driving the steel market. Market volatility demands your attention about what’s driving prices, when and why.” Data sources are listed in each section.

Majestic Steel has granted *Rollforming Magazine* permission to publish information excerpted from the Report for its readers.

## DOMESTIC STEEL PRODUCTION

According to the American Iron & Steel Institute, Weekly Domestic Steel Production report dated December 17, U.S. mill production dipped slightly, producing an estimated 1,651k tons and a 74.3% rate utilization rate. This was down from 1,668k tons and a 75.1% rate previously. By comparison, this was 3.7% lower than the 1,714k tons produced in the same week of 2023.

Production increased in three of the five regions but was offset by large drops in the Midwest and Southern regions. Production from the Southern region dropped the most, sliding from 702k tons to 682k tons.

## SPOT IRON ORE

The Platts, Spot Iron Ore report dated December 20 reports that pricing dipped after climbing the previous four weeks: Spot iron ore pricing settled at \$103.60/mt, down from \$105.95/mt the week prior. This is down 2.2% after hitting the highest price since mid-July.

Iron ore now faces headwinds as China has dialed back steel production so far in December and Chinese mills are also expected to perform equipment maintenance before the new year.

## ZINC PRICE & INVENTORY

Based on the London Metal Exchange, Weekly Zinc Price and Inventory Report and the Shanghai Futures Exchange, Weekly Zinc Inventory Report, both dated December 20, 2024:

Zinc pricing dropped sharply after alternating up and down movements over the last six weeks.

Zinc pricing ended the week at \$2,957/mt (\$1.341/lb), down from \$3,082/mt (\$1.398/lb) previously.

Despite the announcement of stimulus the previous week, overall market sentiment remains negative as China did not fully disclose what the stimulus measures would be and when it would hit the economy.

Global zinc inventory dropped for the fourth consecutive week: LME warehouse inventory slipped again, dropping from 273,650 metric tons to 257,525 metric tons. Shanghai warehouse inventory decreased as well, sliding from 50,666 metric tons to 40,137 metric tons.

## GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

The third and final estimate of U.S. economic growth in Q3, showed growth revised up to a 3.1% annual rate. (Bureau of Economic Analysis, Gross Domestic Product: Q3 2024.)

This is up from the 2.8% annual rate from the second estimate but below the 4.9% annual growth rate in Q3 2023. This third and final update reflected upward revisions to exports and consumer spending. These upward revisions were partly offset by a downward revision to inventory investment. Imports, which are a subtraction to GDP, were revised higher.

Durable goods manufacturing added 0.16% to Q3 GDP, while the construction industry saw a subtraction of 0.01%.

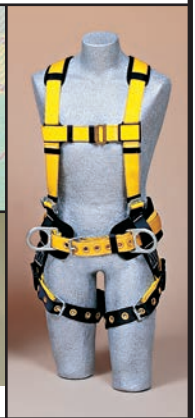
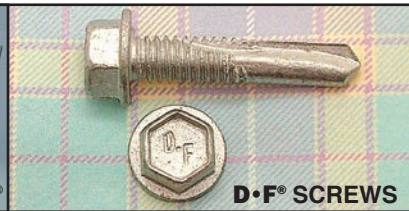
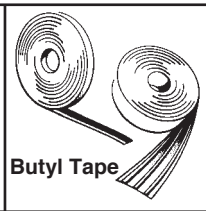
The full library of Core Reports from Majestic Steel USA can be accessed at <https://www.majesticsteel.com/majestic-insights/core-report/>. RF

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# Making the Industry Better

Business Done Right is a Blessing to All!

■ By Linda Schmid

## GETTING STARTED

In those days, back in the '90s, lead times on custom-manufactured metal roofing in the local area were 7-10 days. Understanding that reducing that lead time would have a significant impact on project completion time and profits for the contractor was the epiphany that moved Marvin Ramer forward in 1999 and Ramco was born.

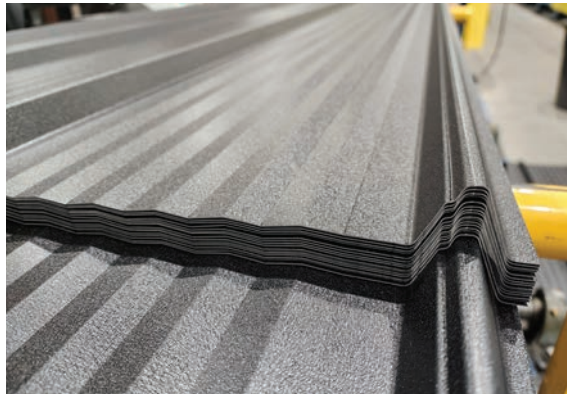
A building contractor, frustrated by long lead times, delivery delays, and incorrect shipments, Ramer decided to do something about it. By April 2000 he convinced a large manufacturer to provide him shipments multiple times a week to supply the local Ramco customers. Between this service and diligent customer care, within three years, in 2003, he was one of the top resellers in the area. He started his own manufacturing business out of a small shop at his home with little funding. But he had three important goals: providing accurate orders, faster lead times to customers, and running a well-grounded company.

Ramer started with two new trim machines: a 10' Schechl trim machine and a Metal Rollforming Systems (MRS) Titan roll former. "I was always interested in machinery," Ramer said, "and the learning curve for adjusting roll-forming machines to make a high-quality panel was complex but fun. I chose new machines because quality has always been our focus. The quality of the machine has a definite impact on the panel quality."

By leasing the building and the machines, Ramer started with basically no money but plenty of passion, grit, and determination. From those early years, Ramer made a point of reinvesting most of the profits back into the company and always holding the line to only grow at the speed of profits. Running the company with such careful attention to financial health



Ramco's original facility.



Ramco's RX-4 panel. ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF RAMCO

translated into top-notch customer service. His rule is that you do the right thing every time, and if it means you take a hit, you take the hit. He has always gone the second mile for his customers, and the result has been company growth.

## GROWTH

Over the years, Ramco has steadily grown—from the first small building to small building add-ons and then an additional building, expanding into a new location and new facility in 2011, and eventually opening a second location in Woodburn. Now, with nearly three decades of growth, Ramco operates three locations across Indiana: Rochester, Woodburn, and Middlebury. The company now sells across the Midwest, throughout Indiana, Illinois, into Ohio and Michigan.

This growth has often been attributed to operational excellence — a term often heard at

Ramco. It's more than just a sign on the wall; it translates into things that customers care about like: most deliveries in under 24 hours, thicker steel, an abundance of inventory, state-of-the-art Bradbury high-speed metal forming equipment, and, of course, people who want to help serve and have bought into the vision of a profitable well-run company. It's good for all involved.

Their facility is kept very clean. That contributes to equipment that works well and provides a quality work environment. They go as far as hand scrubbing machines with soap and degreaser. "Just like my personal truck, it always runs better when it's clean," Ramer added.

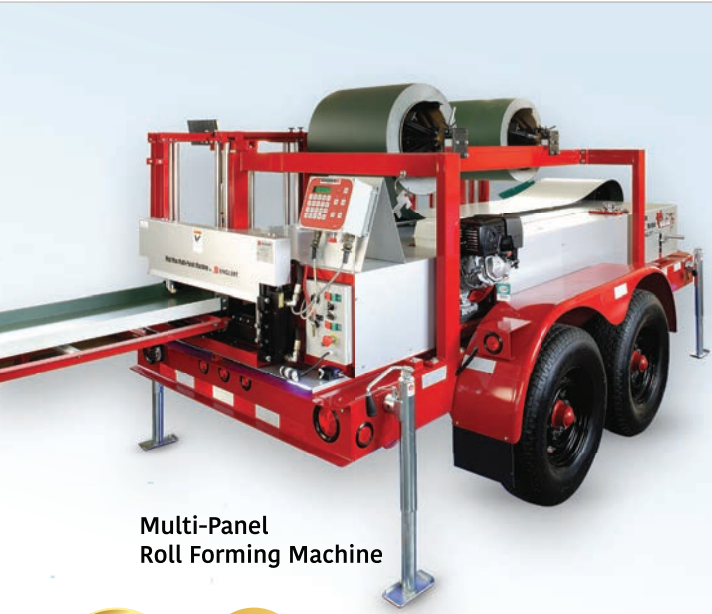
The company produces 11 profiles of metal roofing and siding panels. These include Ram-Panel, two standing seam profiles, Commercial "PBR" and "A" panel, Modern Plank, Metal-lap, Board & Batten, and Ramco's RX-4. The RX-4 is now





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*A completed Ramco building project.*

popular in the industry, but originally, in 2014, it was a unique, market-leading design by Ramer. The company also produces various trims and custom trims.

“We are continually considering how to make life easier for the contractor on the jobsite or up on the roof installing the metal,” said Ramer. As a result, the business has grown from a “one-man-band” to a busy company of 130 employees.

### RAMCO TODAY

Commercial, agricultural, and residential buildings plus roofing for single family and multi-family homes, sheds, and garages are all markets that the company serves. They sell to lumber yards and do-it-yourselfers, but contractors that build metal ag buildings and residential house roofs are always the center of consideration.

“Customers like our contractor-first mentality,” Ramer said. “They care about price, but that is not the be-all and end-all. We are not the cheapest, but customers come back to us because they know when they call they will get a person, not an automated voice system. They know they will be speaking to someone who knows the product and they will not be transferred somewhere else. And,” Ramer finished, “they know their order will be delivered quickly and accurately.”

2024 has been a good year for Ramco. “We have not seen a cool-down. Ramco is growing. We’ve added a location in the last two years, and we are now expanding it. We are also expanding the Rochester location, and we just finished an expansion in Woodburn.”

Across the industry and beyond, companies are finding that retaining good employees is a challenge. However, this company finds little difficulty in retaining its employees. Josh Hudgens, Director of Human Resources, believes this is largely a result of the company culture.

“We have a strong company culture that focuses on a clean, family oriented atmosphere,” Hudgens said. We advertise on Indeed that Ramco is based on conservative Christian values, and we try to make Ramco a productive and happy place for people to come and work. We have occasional events such as



*One of Ramco's high-speed Bradbury roll forming lines.*



*The Middlebury, Indiana, facility.*



*The Woodburn, Indiana, facility.*



*The Rochester, Indiana, facility.*

Ramco fun nights, Christmas parties, and employee cookouts. But I think most of all people are happy to work in a positive, clean environment,” he added.

### COMING IN 2025

Ramer expects to see growth over the course of the next year. He looks to continue growing Ramco’s footprint in the Midwest. Ultimately, they make decisions based on the contractors and how they can best serve them. **RF**

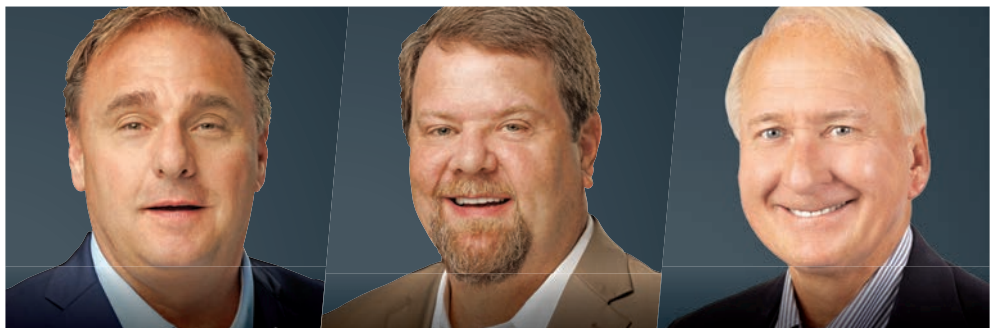
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# Automation Upgrade

## How Coil Farms Streamline Automation for Maximum Efficiency

■ By Rollforming Magazine Staff

An automated coil storage system, often called a coil farm, is designed to organize and store metal coils before they are processed. It serves as a key hub in the production chain, supporting critical operations like cutting, slitting, roll forming, and stamping. For shops that include slitting or cut-to-length operations in their workflow, investing in a coil farm can help resolve storage challenges, reduce material damage, and lower labor costs.

Of course, a coil farm is no small investment. The cost of racks, handling equipment, and storage systems needs to be carefully weighed against the potential benefits. To decide if

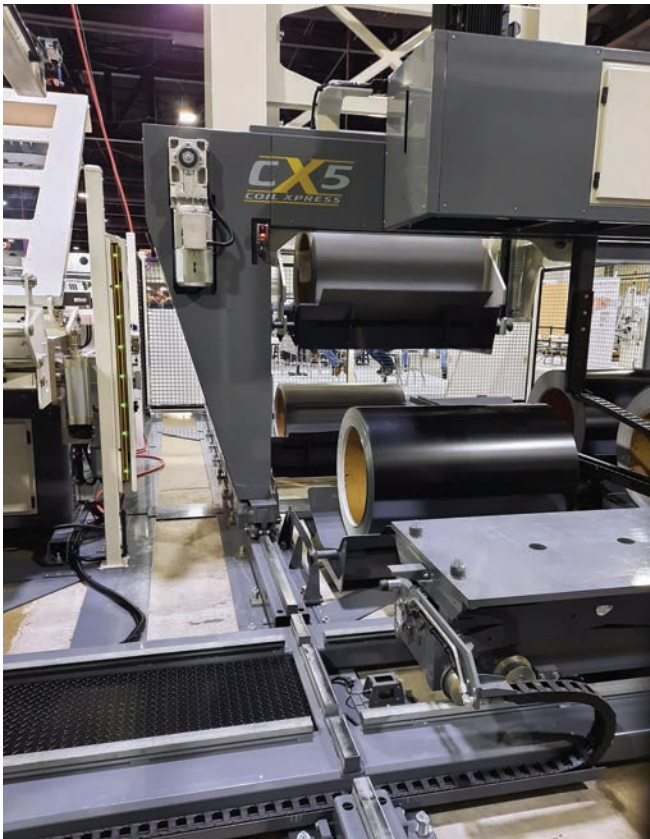
this investment is right for your business, consider these key questions:

1. How many different materials do I need readily available?
2. How often do I need to change materials during production?
3. If I could increase production, could I sell more? How much would automated changeovers boost productivity?

If your shop produces a limited number of panels and trims—and you don't plan to grow—investing in a coil farm might not be the best fit. However, if you're planning to expand, a coil farm can help you scale efficiently. Shops with high production volumes often rely on coil farms to maintain a steady supply of raw materials. Plus, modern systems are often designed to grow with your business, allowing you to add storage capacity as your needs increase.

### SPACE AND FLOOR CAPACITY

One of the first things to consider is whether your facility has enough room for a coil farm. These systems take up a lot of space, so some shops may need to expand. Equipment manufacturers can often customize the layout to fit your available space and ensure the best workflow. Aligning the coil farm with your



*The SWI Machinery's CX5 Coil XPress was demonstrated at METALCON 2024. The SWI CX5 auto decoiling and storage system integrates with any SWI automatic slitter and most roll formers, delivering automatic coil changes in less than 3 minutes. Key features include customizable stations that can accommodate dozens of coils, top-of-the-line guarding and safety features, and mandrel-free coil movement technology. Also, the system keeps track of how much material is on the coil, so the operator always knows how much stock can be run. SHIELD WALL MEDIA PHOTO.*



*This recently installed SWI CX5 Coil XPress is paired with the SWI Marxman PRO, allowing for efficient coil change-outs through an integrated coil management and slitting operation. PHOTO COURTESY OF SWI MACHINERY*

Who Should **Exhibit At The**

# **POST-FRAME BUILDER SHOW**

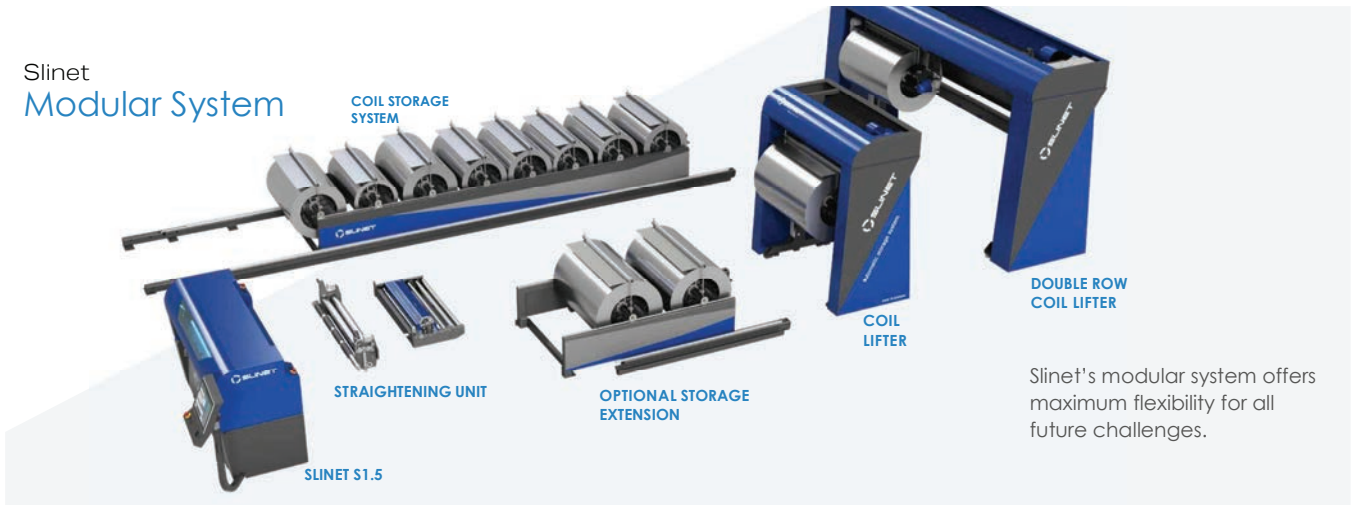
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## Product Feature ))

### Slinet Modular System



ASCO's SLINET S1.5 Slitter with a fully automated 5t coil farm are powerful tools for minimizing production time and automating processes. The high end S1.5 Slitter can process directly out of the automated, intelligent coil storage, which can be configured to hold dozens of coils and multiple rails, depending on what the metal shop's coil storage and handling needs. COURTESY OF ASCO USA, INC.

## RESOURCES

- ASCO USA, Inc., [www.asco-machines.com](http://www.asco-machines.com)
- CIDAN Machinery, [www.cidan.com](http://www.cidan.com)
- SWI Machinery, [www.swimachinery.com](http://www.swimachinery.com)

production layout is critical—it should minimize unnecessary movement of materials to maximize efficiency. When considering the best option for your business, keep in mind that not all systems can be integrated with roll formers and only some can have two slitting lines on it at the same time.

You'll also need to think about the building's foundation. Metal coils are heavy—typically around 10,000 pounds per coil. Some farms can store over 60 coils, so the concrete floor must be thick and strong enough to handle the weight. Additionally, because the coils are moved and repositioned, the foundation must resist cracking under dynamic pressure. It's a good idea to consult a structural engineer to ensure your floor is up to the task. If the foundation isn't strong and level, the equipment may shift out of alignment, causing operational issues.

### KEEPING THE SYSTEM RUNNING SMOOTHLY

Automated coil farms can significantly reduce labor for coil changeovers, but they still require trained operators. Ideally, operators should be trained by the equipment vendor. If that's not an option, experienced operators should train new staff to ensure they understand how to run the machine safely and efficiently.

Regular maintenance is also key. Optic sensors should be wiped clean to ensure accurate readings, and proximity sensors (which act as safety mechanisms) must remain clear to detect metal locations. Keeping the equipment clean and well-maintained helps prevent downtime and ensures smooth operation.

As with any essential equipment, having reliable service support is crucial. Partnering with a vendor that offers robust technical assistance can make all the difference.

### BENEFITS OF A COIL FARM

Here's a quick summary of what a coil farm can offer:

- **Storage:** Coils are organized on racks or flat surfaces for easy access. Automated systems can make coil changes fast and efficient and can also keep track of material use so the operator always knows how much component stock can be run from the remaining coil stock.
- **Handling Equipment:** Tools like overhead cranes, forklifts, or coil lifters safely move heavy coils.
- **Identification and Tracking:** Coils are labeled with specifications (e.g., material type, thickness, weight) and tracked using barcodes or RFID systems for efficient inventory management.
- **Pre-processing Preparation:** The coil farm serves as a staging area, readying coils for processes like slitting, cutting, or roll forming.

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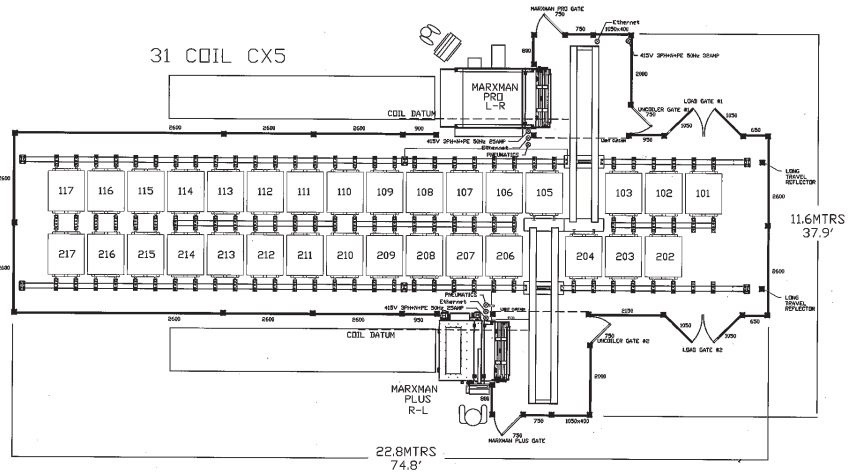
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- **Cost-Effectiveness:** Proper storage prevents damage, minimizes waste, and enhances overall productivity.



**This high-volume setup shows the SWI Machinery CX5, configured to hold 31 coils and feed a Marxman Pro and a Marxman Plus. Note the footprint: 37.9' x 74.8'. COURTESY OF SWI MACHINERY**

**CONCLUSION**

Investing in a coil farm is a significant decision, but it can deliver huge advantages for shops with high production needs or plans for growth. By improving workflow, reducing labor, and supporting scalability,

a coil farm can position your shop for long-term success. Carefully assess your production goals, facility layout, and future plans to determine if it's the right step for your business. **RF**

**Editor's Note:** If automated coil handling doesn't fit your business model, be sure to watch for an article about manual coil handling in the April edition of Rollforming Magazine.

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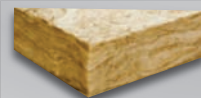


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# What's In Store?

■ By Karen Knapstein

The METALCON 2024 annual conference and tradeshow was held from Wednesday, October 30 to Friday, November 1 at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta. In addition to the hands-on workshops, networking and educational sessions, the event was an excellent opportunity to glean information about the metal construction industry, including opportunities and challenges, as well as insights into what the economy may look like in 2025.

The first morning of the show featured the State of the Industry Panel. The panel was comprised of industry experts that included Paul Trombitas, FMI Corp.; Brian Partyka, Carlisle Construction Materials; Bob Zabcik, Z-Tech Consulting; Tom Seitz, InSeitz & Strategies; Sean McCue, Precoat Metals; and Chandler Barden, CIDAN Machinery. The Metal Construction Association's Jeff Henry served as the moderator.

Keeping in mind there is no crystal ball, and situations could change quickly, key points discussed include:

There was substantial growth from 2021-2023, and declining growth in 2024. A softening is expected in 2025-2026, with growth returning in 2027. The outlook is optimistic about the single-family residential space, while the multi-family decline is driven by overbuilding.

Non-residential and industrial is expected to see "unprecedented spending" over the next two to three years.

A continual bright spot is the re-roofing sector, which is reported to have the most backlog.

Additionally, the amount of metal being used in construction is up, and there's growth in regional manufacturing of roofing and wall panels. The demand for custom wall panels is also on the rise. The development and availability of more diverse coatings and textures is having a positive impact on the indus-

try in terms of growth. On the equipment side, there continues to be growth and expansion of automation to increase production and deal with labor variables.

Another quickly developing and changing facet of the industry is the coatings sector. Today's technology has SMP and PVDF coatings lasting 35-40 years or longer, which is very attractive to end users (customers). Additionally, coating technology that uses electricity to cure coil coatings makes it more attractive because it imbues minimal carbon to the material, which has been an increasing concern for the last several years.

One of the challenges discussed was the difficulty in getting required building permits. Hurricanes and wildfires are contributing to changes in codes and standards, including material requirements. In the coming years, look for material labeling and testing requirements.

On the second day of the event, Dr. Anirban Basu, Chairman and CEO of Sage Policy Group, Inc., a Baltimore-based economic and policy consulting firm, delivered a presentation titled *The Good, The Bad, & The Ugly: Financial Outlook and Trends for Metal Construction*. Basu reflected on expectations for 2023, noting that a recession had seemed inevitable at the start of the year due to the challenges faced in 2022. However, this anticipated downturn didn't happen. Instead, consumer spending surged, particularly on services like travel and concert tickets, leading to an increase in retail sales.

Basu highlighted that as of September 2024, there were 7.4 million job openings,



METALCON 2024's State of the Industry Panel included (L to R) moderator Jeff Henry, Metal Construction Association (MCA); Paul Trombitas, FMI Corp.; Brian Partyka, Carlisle Construction Materials; Bob Zabcik, Z-Tech Consulting; Tom Seitz, InSeitz & Strategies; Sean McCue, Precoat Metals; and Chandler Barden, CIDAN Machinery. SHIELD WALL MEDIA PHOTO.

including 288,000 in the construction sector, with consistent job growth each month since December 2020. While certain areas of the labor market have shown signs of weakening, construction wage premiums have declined relative to other industries. Personal savings, which had risen during the pandemic, have been depleted, and prices continue to rise.

He reported a 23% overall inflation rate, with energy, transportation services, and tobacco and smoking products experiencing the highest increases, while groceries were less affected. Additionally, credit card debt reached \$1.14 trillion, the highest level since 2004. Basu warned that the current rate of consumer spending is unsustainable and predicted further economic slowing in the near future.

Key points from Basu's presentation included:



*Dr. Anirban Basu delivers "The Good, The Bad, & The Ugly: Financial Outlook and Trends for Metal Construction" to open the second day of METALCON 2024.* PHOTO COURTESY OF NEUBEK PHOTOGRAPHERS.

The nation's significant debt levels and high borrowing costs are cause for concern.

He expressed pessimism about the near-term economic outlook.

Geopolitical issues and upcoming federal elections contribute to economic uncertainty and risk.

While a slowdown is expected next year, a recession is no longer the baseline projection.

To catch the METALCON 2025 State of the Industry panel, mark your calendar: The event is slated for October 21-23, 2025, at the Las Vegas Convention Center. **RF**

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### COMBILIFT EARNS 'COMPANY OF THE YEAR' AWARD

Combilift, a provider of material handling solutions, has been awarded Company of the Year at the prestigious Business & Finance Awards 2024, in association with KPMG Ireland. This achievement marks Combilift's ninth major win in the past three months, solidifying its position as an industry leader.

The Company of the Year award, presented to Combilift's CEO Martin McVicar by Seamus Hand of KPMG at the 50th Business & Finance Awards ceremony held in Dublin, is a testament to the company's significant impact on both the Irish economy and the global market. Combilift, with annual revenue exceeding €500 million, has continued to thrive with its export-focused business model, with 98% of its operations serving international markets.

Since its founding in 1998, Combilift has built a global reputation as the largest manufacturer of multi-directional, articulated, and sideloading forklifts, as well as large material handling equipment such as straddle carriers, with over 85,000 units in operation across 85 countries. The company's commitment to innovation, sustainability, and research and development has been pivotal to its exceptional growth, making it a true leader in the material handling industry.

Martin McVicar, CEO of Combilift, said: "This award reflects the bold vision and relentless drive that has been at the heart of Combilift since Robert Moffett



From left to right: Ian Hyland, Business & Finance; Martin McVicar, Combilift; Seamus Hand, KPMG.

and I started in 1998. Every forklift, every innovation, and every milestone reflects our commitment to pushing boundaries and transforming material handling worldwide. This moment belongs to our employees, our dealers, and our customers who rely on us to deliver quality material handling solutions to optimize their warehouse space."

### Joining a Legacy of Excellence

Winning this award places Combilift among an elite group of previous winners, including industry giants Glen Dimplex, Kingspan, Primark, Google, and Intel. As a homegrown Irish business with a global footprint, this latest recognition serves as a powerful reminder of the company's ongoing success and its critical role in shaping the future of the material handling industry.

### S-5! RECEIVES 2024 INDUSTRY ADVOCATE AWARD, GETS 50 NEW PATENTS IN 2024

S-5!, the original inventor of engineered metal roof attachments, was honored with the 2024 Gold-Level Industry Advocate Award by the Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA) at its annual meeting and awards presentation held Dec. 9-11 in Savannah, Georgia.

The award recognizes S-5! for its exceptional service, unwavering participation and significant contributions to the growth and success of the metal building systems industry.

S-5!'s CEO and Founder, Rob Haddock, and Vice President of Operations, Shawn Haddock, proudly accepted the award on behalf of the company.

This prestigious gold-level recognition was granted to S-5! for its outstanding commitment to advancing MBMA's initiatives, including active involvement in MBMA committees, advocacy efforts to elevate the metal building systems industry, and participation in various educational and promotional events in addition to participation in its safety program.

This is the 6th consecutive year S-5! has been recognized by the MBMA in its annual award program.

Also noteworthy, S-5! was issued 50 new patents in 2024, bringing the total number of patents issued to 194 since its first patent application in 1991.

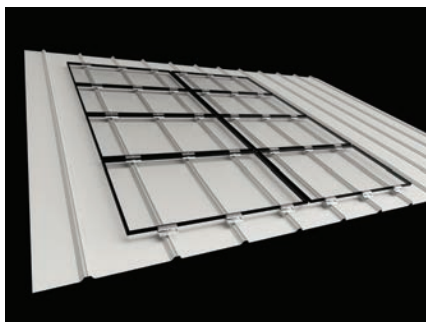
These patents are issued by global patent agencies across multiple regions, including the European Union (12), the United States (8), China (9), India (6), Australia (4), New Zealand (2), the United Kingdom (2), South Africa (2), Costa Rica (1), Kuwait (1), Mexico (1), Saudi Arabia (1), and Turkey (1).



Shawn Haddock (left) and Rob Haddock, S-5!, receive the MBMA's 2024 Industry Advocate Award. PHOTO COURTESY OF S-5!

As the global demand for solar energy surges, fueled by clean energy initiatives and decreasing solar capital costs, S-5! is experiencing increased demand for its solar attachment solutions, particularly in the Asia-Pacific, Latin American and the European Union regions.

Most recently, the Indian Patent Office granted S-5! patent #423672-001 for its new Protea™ PV rail-less solar mounting solution, designed for mounting framed



**S-5! PVKIT HUR 2.0 rail-less, direct-attach, solar mounting solution for metal roofs.**  
PHOTO COURTESY OF S-5!

solar modules to trapezoidal metal roofs, while providing certified electrical bonding and grounding.

“We are seeing increasing demand for certifiably tested, engineered and affordable lifetime components that allow easy attachment of rooftop accessories to metal roofs while maintaining roof integrity,” said Rob Haddock, founder

and CEO of S-5! “In 2024, we prioritized certifications through third-party testing agencies to ensure the reliability and holding strength of our attachment solutions.”

Notable achievements include FM Approvals listings to FM 4478 for the Ensolro System, which includes the S-5! PVKIT HUR 2.0 rail-less, direct-attach, solar mounting solution for metal roofs. It can withstand wind uplift forces of up to 150 psf in high-wind and hurricane zones. Additionally, S-5! standing seam clamps earned Florida Product Approvals (FPA) for High Velocity and Hurricane Zone (HVHZ)—a rigorous approval for high wind zones. These achievements further establish S-5!’s leadership in product testing, certifications and standards, extending the reliability of its solutions worldwide.

S-5! is the first metal roof mounting

system manufacturer – in the distinctive product category it originally invented – to achieve these industry-defining accreditations.

“Issued patents are the proof of innovation,” added Haddock. “S-5! is not just a manufacturer; we are an innovation-driven company dedicated to our core principles—innovate, improve, and re-innovate—all while staying true to our commitment to do things The Right Way!™”

## MILL STEEL COMPANY ACQUIRES MARYLAND METALS PROCESSING

Mill Steel Co., one of the nation’s largest distributors of flat-rolled carbon steel, stainless steel and aluminum, is pleased to announce its acquisition of Maryland Metals Processing (MMP). MMP is a leading stainless and



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aluminum toll processor based in Baltimore, providing expert cut to length, polishing, slitting and coil enhancement services. This transaction further strengthens Mill Steel's national footprint and processing capabilities.

Mill Steel recognizes Maryland Metals' reputation for providing an exceptional toll processing experience. The company will take a hands-off approach to ensure MMP continues to operate independently – retaining its name, business model, and all associates – while adding further toll processing capacity to the facility.

"We are excited to bring Maryland Metals Processing into the Mill Steel family," said Pam Heglund, CEO of Mill Steel. "The facility is strategically located to further enhance our shipping and processing capabilities across the country and beyond. Most importantly, we are committed to preserving the outstanding service, relationships, and quality that Maryland Metals' customers have come to trust."

Ken McAvoy, CEO of Maryland Metals Processing, echoed these sentiments, stating, "Joining forces with Mill Steel is a tremendous opportunity for us. Our customers can expect the same high standard of service from the same dedicated team, while benefiting from Mill Steel's expanded resources and national reach. We look forward to continuing to meet our customers' needs with the excellence they've always relied on."

The purchase highlights Mill Steel's long-term commitment to growth while upholding the core strengths of the businesses it acquires. As the two companies align, customers can expect increased efficiencies and additional processing capabilities.

## MBMA ANNOUNCES CHRISTEN FUNK AS 2025-2026 CHAIR

The Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA) held its annual meeting December 9 – 11 in Savannah, Georgia. The annual meeting attendance was the largest in MBMA's history. During the event, MBMA elected Christen Funk as the organization's next Chair for the 2025 and 2026 term. The association also elected its 2025 board of directors. These industry leaders include:

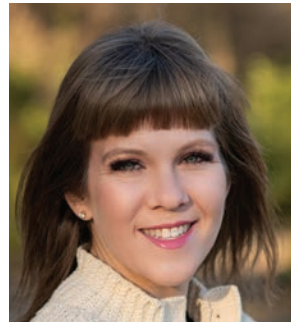
- Christen Funk, Chair, Butler Manufacturing
- Rob Mutersbaugh, Vice Chair, Alliance Steel
- Tom Boal, Behlen Building Systems
- Dave Koubek, Chief Buildings
- Austin Hess, Cornerstone Building Brands
- Ron Ambrosius, Inland Building Systems
- Steve Browning, Vulcan Steel Structures
- Mark Van Dyken, Nucor Building Systems
- Brant Smith, Pacific Building Systems
- David Hirte, Akzo Nobel Coatings
- Darren McGonigle, Konecranes

"Leading the MBMA is a great honor and privilege," says Funk. "The next two years will offer many opportunities as well as challenges for our industry. I am looking forward to helping the organization grow and I will actively continue to pro-

mote its leading roles in the metal building systems industry."

"It is with great pleasure that I welcome Christen Funk as the next MBMA chair and the first female chair in the association's history," adds Tony Bouquot, MBMA general manager. "The MBMA has a host of initiatives and endeavors that are helping move our industry forward. I am looking forward to working with Christen who will keep us a leader, focusing on metal building systems research, education and advocacy."

Metal building systems account for nearly 30% of all low-rise commercial construction in the U.S., and MBMA's leadership has helped to grow the use and acceptance of this popular building type. Under the direction of the board and through its committees, MBMA and its members invest thousands of hours each year to ensure MBMA continues to lead and advance metal building design and construction.



**Christen Funk, 2025-26 MBMA Chair.** PHOTO COURTESY OF MBMA

## COREY LOVETT JOINS SPAX AS TERRITORY REP

SPAX® Engineered Fasteners, part of Altenloh, Brinck & Co. US, has announced Corey Lovett as a new team member who will help further the brands' leadership in the industry.

Lovett joins SPAX as a Territory Representative, based in Grand Prairie, Texas, and covering the territory of Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arkansas, and Tennessee. With more than 10 years of experience in account management and sales, Lovett excels in relationship building while sharing brand awareness and maximizing sales.

The SPAX brand represents a comprehensive range of engineered fasteners designed for the construction industry and symbolizes the highest quality fastening solutions. Recognized as one of the most prominent brands in Europe, SPAX Multi-purpose Construction Screws and PowerLags® made their debut in the U.S. market in 1997. Notably, since 2006, SPAX fasteners sold in North America are manufactured in Bryan, Ohio, ensuring a commitment to quality and reliability.



**Corey Lovett, SPAX Engineered Fasteners.** PHOTO COURTESY OF ALTENLOH, BRINCK & CO.

## HY-BRID LIFTS APPOINTS DAVID PORTER AS VP OF SALES & MARKETING

Hy-Brid Lifts, a manufacturer of aerial lift equipment, has appointed David Porter as its new vice president of sales and marketing. In this role, David will oversee the North

American sales team and focus on identifying opportunities for growth and product development. He will play a key role in fostering customer relationships and advancing Hy-Brid Lifts' commitment to being a trusted partner for its clients.

"When Hy-Brid reached out, I was thrilled about the opportunity," David said. "The chance to work with a smaller, family-owned manufacturer based in the U.S. was a significant draw for me. Hy-Brid's well-established products and strong customer relationships create an exciting platform to enhance our current partnerships and build new ones. I firmly believe in treating others as you wish to be treated, and I'll bring that philosophy to my role here at Hy-Brid."

In addition to managing the North American sales team, David will drive marketing initiatives and establish a ded-

icated product support team to collaborate closely with the sales department. This team will provide direct assistance to customers, ensuring they have the resources needed to succeed and responsive support when required. As Hy-Brid Lifts ventures into new equipment categories, David will also contribute to the development of innovative products tailored to those markets.

David brings over 25 years of leadership experience in the equipment industry, having worked extensively with dealers and original equipment manufacturers. His background includes more than 11 years as a branch manager for rental companies, including RSC, United Rentals and H&E Rentals, and progressive roles from sales and business manager to director of sales for other aerial equipment manufacturers.

RF



David Porter, Hy-Brid Lifts. PHOTO COURTESY OF HY-BRID LIFTS.

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# Made in the USA

## Greener and Cleaner Steel

■ By Courtney Glover

### CONSIDERING THE ENVIRONMENT

Unlike many other countries, the regulations in the United States push steel manufacturers to consider the environment when creating their product. The company Steel Dynamics is a good example of an American steel manufacturer that puts emphasis on environmental factors. They are one of few steel producers that exclusively use Electric Arc Furnace (EAF) technology. As the name suggests, EAF is a process that uses an electric arc to melt scrap steel and other recycled metals into new steel. This technology generates approximately one third of the carbon emissions produced, and energy intensity required, by traditional blast furnace steel-making technology, making it a much more environmentally friendly approach.

Steel Dynamics works to utilize new technologies and processes to reduce the impact on the environment and climate. By utilizing EAF, the company limits their carbon emissions while delivering quality products. Additionally, they offer incentives to employees to create solutions that increase efficiencies, reduce raw material usage, reuse secondary materials, and promote material conservation and recycling.

Though Steel Dynamics is only one of few that *exclusively* utilize EAF, most United States steel manufacturers use recycled steel. In fact, two thirds of the steel made in the United States comes from recycled scrap.

### SCRAP STEEL

Steel can be easily recycled; it does not have to be sorted by size or color. Steel

is also considered one of the most easily recycled materials due to its magnetic properties, which make it easy to separate from other materials during the recycling process. U.S. Steel Manufacturing tells us that recycling scrap metal to produce new steel significantly reduces the carbon footprint compared to traditional steel making processes. Along with helping the environment, it is cost efficient. The primary cost in recycling steel involves the collecting and processing of the steel. In contrast, manufacturing new steel would involve a high cost of mining iron-ore, refining it, and processing it into steel.

***In the U.S. about 70 percent of all steel produced is made with recycled materials.***

Recycling steel impacts pricing substantially, acting as a cost-effective alternative to producing steel from raw materials. The properties that allow the steel to be easily recyclable are also the properties that allow it to retain its strength and durability.

Scrap steel is considered to be just as sturdy as newly produced steel. Steel retains its strength and properties even when recycled. GLE Scrap Metal explains that this means that it can be repeatedly melted down and reused without losing its structural integrity. Because it retains its natural qualities no matter how many times it is recycled, recycled steel can be utilized for anything from construction to cars without any compromises on quality.

In the U.S. about 70 percent of all steel produced is made with recycled materials. About 80 million tons of steel is recycled

in the United States each year. This is more than all recycled aluminum, paper, plastic, and glass combined. The United States processes enough ferrous scrap metal each day, by weight, to build twenty-five Eiffel Towers every day of the year. This equates to about \$15.9 billion in scrap metal per year. The U.S. also exports more scrap metal than 75 other countries, bested only by Japan, Germany, China, and South Korea. Exporting scrap metal is beneficial for the economy but additionally supports recycling around the globe, reduces the need for new metal mining, and helps preserve natural resources.

### U.S. QUALITY VS. OVERSEAS

The steel created within the United States is generally considered to be of higher quality in comparison to overseas steel. Endura Steel explains that this is mainly due to stricter quality standards and regulations enforced by the U.S., which leads to greater consistency and reliability of the product. In general, the United States tends to also have stricter quality control when it comes to steel manufacturing. The U.S. steel industry is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Some overseas steel manufacturers may add elements like boron and chromium to their steel to meet certain classifications. These additives can compromise the steel's strength and quality. Additionally, American steel has lower oxidation levels than steel from other



countries, which allows the steel to be less likely to rust and degrade over time.

The U.S. steel industry has strongly invested in modernizing its production methods. This reduces emissions and waste which benefits the environment and contributes to the quality of the steel. The U.S. has a reputation of producing consistently high-quality steel across different branches. In comparison, many foreign countries still utilize older, more polluting techniques to produce steel. The PSMC (Iron and Steel Industry in Pakistan) states that the highest quality steel in the world is produced by companies in Japan, Germany, and the United States.

### WHY IS U.S. STEEL CLEANER?

The Blue Green Alliance describes U.S. steel to be cleaner than steel produced in many other countries. They explain

that this is primarily because of stricter environmental regulations in the U.S., which push them to use cleaner technologies and practices. The United States steel manufacturers focus on compliance with environmental laws, including the National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants, Maximum Achievable Control Technology, and Iron and Steel Effluent Guidelines and Standards. They give greater attention to continuous improvement in resource management and actively reducing greenhouse gas emissions through innovation.

By utilizing recycled scrap, the United States significantly reduces its carbon footprint. Additionally, the U.S. often utilizes a cleaner energy mix for steel production, including more natural gas and renewable energy sources, resulting in lower carbon emissions. In fact, the

CO<sub>2</sub> intensity of steel made in the United States is half of the amount of carbon per ton of steel made in China and India, the world's largest steel producers.

### CONCLUSION

When considering steel manufacturing, it is beneficial to also consider the environmental impact. The United States is leading the way when it comes to recycling scrap steel, minimizing the carbon footprint, and retaining product quality. Utilizing the electric arc furnace technology like Steel Dynamics and/or reducing greenhouse gasses through innovation are large steps to making greener and cleaner steel and a healthier planet. **RF**

*Courtney Glover is a freelance writer and photographer based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She contributes her talents to various publications.*

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# Advice From The Experts

## Additional Insights From the 2024 Construction Rollforming Industry Panel

■ By Karen Knapstein

The 2024 Construction Rollforming Show featured the inaugural Construction Rollforming Industry Panel. Moderated by Randy Chaffee, Source One Marketing, the 2024 panel included Ben Schmidt, Bradbury Group; Steve Swaney, Mid South Aluminum; Bob Kula, Mill Steel; and Mike O'Hara, Levi's Building Components.

*Rollforming Magazine* published the initial installment of the panel discussion in its last edition (see *Rollforming Magazine*, December 2024, pp. 33-37). This is a continuation of highlights from that discussion.

The Industry Panelists all agreed that suppliers are a valuable source of information in addition to materials. Once you figure out who you're going to use for your component supplier, coil supplier, and so on, use them as much as you can. "We want you to be successful because, obviously, it goes without saying, our success is based on your success," said moderator Randy Chaffee.

Levi's Building Components' Mike O'Hara brought up that it's important to understand your competition and your market. "It's not always about how you buy. It's how you sell. Service, quality are things that you can stand behind. It's your brand. It's your business. And it's not about buying right. It's about selling right, in my opinion."

Randy explored the topic a little further, explaining how finding your niche and making informed decisions are important. "It's easy if you've got this really successful neighbor 20 miles away that's roll forming, but he's been there for 20 years," Randy explained. "He's built a massive business. He's got 20 different panels and 32 colors, and he's got all this stuff.

"You don't have to have that to compete, and you can't unless you've got unlimited funds somehow. There's no way, and you're going to bury yourself right out of the gates trying to do that. What you've got to do is compete, again, on your brand and start building your brand. Because I can see where you would say, 'Well, they've got all these colors and all these panels, and I've got to have it all, too, to compete,' and you don't. You start with *your* market."

Randy explains they probably didn't have all the patterns and products at the start either. It may be a more financially sound move to source some products on a wholesale basis until you're at the point where it makes sense for you to produce the profiles or other components yourself.

Mill Steel's Bob Kula commented about the evolution of the roll forming business. "[Many] people that have roll formers



### 2024 Construction Rollforming Show Industry Panel

- Ben Schmidt, Bradbury Group
- Steve Swaney, Mid South Aluminum
- Randy Chaffee, moderator, Source One Marketing
- Bob Kula, Mill Steel
- Mike O'Hara, Levi's Building Components

today didn't have roll formers five years ago. They were buying panels from somebody. So the supplier of the panels obviously helped them get into the business, whether it was selling them coil or referring them to a fastener guy. It really is the buddy system. Don't go it alone."

Ben Schmidt from The Bradbury Group advised rollformers to limit offerings and make sure that what they do offer is of good quality. "Make sure that your panel (and it doesn't happen with domestic supply or domestic equipment builders or machine builders very often), but make sure it will make your panel to 40 7/8". I'm sure the guys can probably tell you it is horrendous some of the machines that come over. They're like, 'Oh, no, you need a 41 9/16". Well, at least that's a common stretch. But [they'll say] you need a 42" or something silly. Just ask that question because everything is about the coil inventory.

"And as you guys know," he continued, "you buy by the pound and sell by the foot. Some of the worst stories I've heard is, 'Ben, I need a machine because the one I bought, I got a 42 1/4" strip.' So anyway, ask that question." Managing that is very important because you "can't sell out of an empty wagon."

Mike reminded everyone that organizing the shop for efficiency is critical. "We've all been in a lot of shops, seen people maneuvering around. ... Having the right colors of trim next to

the colors of fasteners or whatever it is, and having efficiency within your shop, I think, is critical.”

Randy pointed out that roll forming panels is fast, and bending trims takes a lot more time, relatively speaking. Since it does take more time, the question was raised if keeping some trims in stock makes sense because it will open up time on the bender or folder for special trims that will take more time.

Bob responded, “I think a lot of times people overstock some common stock, and then it sits there and collects dust. So you don’t want to get too far ahead of yourself on the trim. You don’t want to be on a six-lane freeway when you’re starting off on the country road. That’s the biggest common mistake, and then you’re out of business, unfortunately.”

An audience member commented that one of the biggest mistakes he’s seen roll forming newcomers make is they didn’t go visit other shops.

“If they have a friend or somebody that’s already been in the business five years,” he said, “[you’ll find] it’s all about efficiency.” He’s seen people bend trims and then have to move them all to the other side of the building. “If you have any opportunity to go see a business that’s already [been] up and running for a few

years, they’ve got that efficiency already nailed. You just copy it, they’ll let you if you have a friend. I know some people are very secretive about it. I can list a couple of people, but it’s all about that efficiency.

“I’ve seen people where they had to even move the roll former later because they couldn’t make a 40-foot panel,” he continued. “They didn’t think they’d need a 40-foot panel. Now they’re going to want to run something longer than that.”

Mid South Aluminum’s Steve Swaney added, “We can usually make those contacts for you. It may not be somebody right in your backyard who purposely does not want to share their secrets and success. But regionally, if it’s someplace that you may have family that you go visit or something, we can typically find someone in an area that you can get in to see.”

Looking to the future, the panelists discussed the areas that are growing and the areas that are expected to grow in roll forming.

Bob said, “Board and batten is the biggest thing and obviously the wood grain prints. Standing seam, that’s going to continue to be popular for residential.

“Who knows what the new innovation will be. I really don’t



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know at this point,” he added with a chuckle.

Ben said it depends on which part of the country you're in. He lives in central Kansas and said in his area, there are “probably less than ten metal roofs. So anything that's converting asphalt to steel” is an opportunity. Considering the sustainability of the roofing materials, steel is infinitely recyclable while “asphalt fills landfills.”

Additionally, Ben said he thinks “solar still has a ways to go. I think solar is still coming at us. As we all look at our utility bills, power costs more and more every day. We're seeing a push on that side as well.

From there, the discussion turned to the best storage and handling practices for coils, panels, and components.

Steve said, “A lot of roll formers' facilities that I go in to see, I cringe a little in terms of how the coils are handled once they're depalletized.

“I mean, we go as a supply chain to great lengths to work with our various processors to protect and get you, if you will, a 100% usable product into your plant. And then you guys typically will run off a portion and lay them down or try to repalletize

them. But we see a lot of handling damage done to them. You lay them on a gravel floor, or a concrete floor. If nothing else, go out and buy some remnant carpeting, some high-density foam. Put those coil portions on something that protects them so there's not going to be dents. Be careful how you handle them, whether it's with a crane, forklift, so you're not dinging the edges,” he continued.

## 2024 Construction Rollforming Show

Ben addressed some best practices from an equipment standpoint: If you're going to offload or pick up that bundle [of panels] with a forklift, then think about where you want to put the overlap edge, if you want it on the operator side or on the drive side. “So there's different thoughts

about that,” he said. “One, a lot of times it's on the operator side so the operator can see the overlap. The disadvantage of that is if you come in with a forklift, then you're going to be picking it up and you have the potential to damage that overlap. So some guys like it on the other side.”

Another thing pertains to coil sag, or coils becoming out of round. “It's just the nature of the business; you guys are doing 15, 20, 50 coil changes every day. So until that thing gets depleted,

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you can do something as simple as build cradles out of lumber or steel so you can pick up from the bottom and raise up [the coil].

“Or you can go to Caldwell and buy an actual coil eye versus going in there with your forklift with your tongs to pick it up [using the eye].

“As far as making the panel,” he continued, “from a roll forming perspective, anything we can do to eliminate the distance of the drop of the panel as it comes out of the roll former is going to help you.

“There’s two reasons why that’s a big deal. One, if you’re post-cutting it, it comes out and it stops and then it shears, you have that force on that panel.”

To illustrate: Imagine a 30-foot panel coming out of a roll former, trying to drop before it’s cut. When the shear comes down, it’s not going to cut as clean as it would if the panel is straight and level. “So then you’re going to get a nasty burr at times.

“The other big thing is it comes out and you’re going to have end flare on that. So then you’re going to have more (like some guys call it) of a fish mouth lap. It’s going to be opened up, it’s not going to be tight.

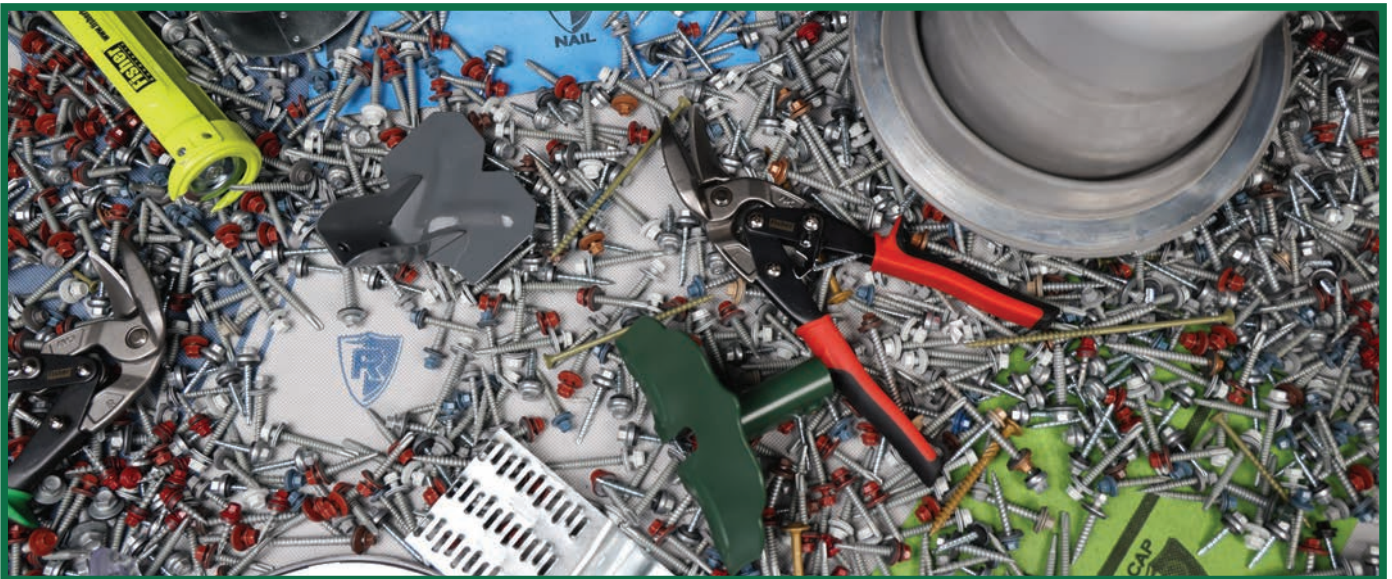
“And then the other problem is if it drops that far down, it’s going to want to float a little bit and then you have a potential for damage.

If you’re shearing, cutting it to length before it’s formed or after it’s formed, you want the burr to be up. “The reason for that is most guys are gliding panels. Whenever a panel comes out, you’re gliding on top of each other. If your shear is down and you get a little bit of dullness on your blade, then you’re going to scratch that guy all the way through because it doesn’t matter what machine you’re using, but you’re going to have a burr of some description on there.

“So if you can have your burr up, then that little bit of scratch down the underside doesn’t kill you.

“And then probably the last thing I’d tell you guys about would be on the trim side. Road rash is a real thing; handling is a real thing. Put film on your trim. If you’re roll forming your trim or if you’re folding your trim, it’s going to get it to the job site safely because the trim is your building.”

Since the first Construction Rollforming Industry Panel was a well-attended success, the plan is to include another panelist event during the 2025 Show. The 2025 Construction Rollforming Show is slated for October 1-2 at the Dayton Convention Center in Dayton, Ohio. If you would like specific questions addressed, mail or email your questions to Rollforming Magazine, ATTN: Karen Knapstein, PO Box 255, Iola WI 54945 or email to [karen@shieldwallmedia.com](mailto:karen@shieldwallmedia.com). **RF**



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# Analyzing Opportunity Costs

## OEE and the Hidden Roll Former Part II

■ By AMS Controls

*Note from the Editor: The first installment of this article was published in the August/September 2024 edition of Rollforming Magazine. Here, published with permission, we have the second installment, originally written and published online by AMS Controls: <https://www.amscontrols.com/oeo-analyzing-opportunity-costs/>.*

It's not uncommon for roll formers to have an average 20% OEE [Overall Equipment Effectiveness]. Some may even say that 20% OEE is a great number. As established in Part I of our OEE discussion (see *Rollforming Magazine, August/September 2024, pages 8-10*), a 20% OEE says that you're only experiencing 20% of what your roll former can produce, and you're walking away from the remaining 80%.

What is the opportunity cost of being satisfied with a 20% OEE?

### WHAT IS OPPORTUNITY COST?

Opportunity cost is defined as a benefit that could have been received but was given up in order to take another course of action. To put this in manufacturing parlance, we can say that opportunity cost is the benefit that could have been realized by running a production line as efficiently as the line was designed, but decisions were made to run the line at a less efficient rate. So how do we calculate this cost? Let's consider Tim of ACME Manufacturing.

ACME Manufacturing is a typical custom fabricator in the U.S., running two shifts to produce roll formed siding and custom trim. Business is booming and ACME Manufacturing operations manager Tim has dreams of growing his

operations to keep pace with the growing demand in the marketplace. Tim has answered "yes" to the question, "If you could produce more, could you sell it?"

Variable costs per 3000 feet	
Average selling price	\$1,300.00
Material cost	\$800.00
Freight cost	\$100.00
Commissions, discounts, rebates	\$3.00
Unit margin	\$397.00
<b>Margin per foot</b>	<b>\$0.13</b>

Opportunity cost calculation: 30 minute increase at 300 FPM	
Daily opportunity cost (0.13 x 30 x 300)	\$1,170
Weekly opportunity cost (Daily x 5)	\$5,850
<b>Annual opportunity cost</b>	<b>\$304,200</b>

### ADDING MANPOWER AND SHIFTS ARE NOT GOOD OPTIONS

As a family-owned custom fabricator that has been in business for over 50 years, ACME Manufacturing knows only too well the difficulty in finding skilled workers. A past attempt at establishing a third shift ended disastrously, adding to their labor cost without increasing throughput enough to justify the added overhead.

An analysis of ACME Manufacturing's production reveals the 20% OEE and this starts Tim thinking. Demand for ACME Manufacturing's product is at an all-time high. Orders are getting backed up. Since adding an additional shift isn't an option, Tim decides to calculate the opportunity

cost of increasing production within their existing setup.

### UNDERSTANDING FIXED AND VARIABLE COSTS

Fixed costs do not change and are not affected by volume. For example, overhead and building costs are fixed. These costs do not change to reflect how many jobs are processed at a given time. Regardless of how many or how few jobs are run, fixed costs remain constant and do not change.

Variable costs on other hand change depending on how many jobs are in production. These costs include material and freight, along with other costs of doing business such as commissions, discounts and rebates.

### CALCULATING MARGIN ON INCREMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS IN PRODUCTION

Tim decides to use the premise that since he is calculating jobs beyond his normal production, he will start his opportunity cost calculation with some baseline assumptions: current business for ACME Manufacturing will remain unchanged and pay for all fixed costs. For this exercise, the incremental growth will be produced by the existing manpower, with no additional overtime. Using these baseline assumptions, fixed costs and labor costs will not be part of the incremental opportunity cost calculation.

By applying these assumptions, the table shown illustrates what Tim uncovers:

Tim is confident he can increase production by reducing his high downtime rates and improving efficiency. Tim has

a plan to start small: eliminate manual order entry at the controller. Tim estimates a conservative daily incremental increase of 30 minutes at 300 FPM. Based on the calculations, Tim conservatively estimates an opportunity cost of \$1,170 a day. Looking forward, this additional \$1,170 a day equates to \$5,850 a week, or \$304,200 annually.

**OPPORTUNITY COST CALCULATIONS HELP JUSTIFY EXPENSES**

By completing the opportunity cost calculation exercise, Tim clearly sees how a small improvement can make a big impact on ACME Manufacturing’s capacity and profitability. As a bonus, Tim now has the justification to pursue a solution to eliminate manual order entry at the controller.

Tim plans on analyzing processes at ACME Manufacturing in greater detail to find more opportunities to improve capacity. His goal of meeting customer demand and increasing production capacity within his current framework is within his reach.

**THE VERSATILITY OF OPPORTUNITY COST**

The exercise of calculating opportunity cost is a valuable tool for manufacturers. By creating a monetary metric for any operational activity, opportunity cost can help quantify decisions and continuous improvement initiatives. From ways to reduce scrap, improve downtime or even calculating the ROI for a large equipment purchase, opportunity cost can inform these activities and help manufacturers make quality decisions.

Since opportunity cost puts a dollar figure on operational procedures, accurate calculations are very important. Be sure to remove the appropriate fixed costs from any incremental calculations for a true representation of opportunity cost.

Ultimately, opportunity cost shines a light on the financial impact of running a plant at a higher level of efficiency and capacity. In short, opportunity cost is one of the key tools in the journey for higher OEE.

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# Signaling Tech & Crane Hoists

Audible and visible signals reduce risk of dangerous, costly accidents

■ By Jacob Vernon, Signaling Specialist Audible & Visual Signaling, Pfannenberg

Settings where crane hoists are employed pose significant dangers to technicians, operators, and other workers on the floor. Because of these safety risks, everyone on the floor must be alert to the crane and its load when nearby.

Audible and visible signals help protect workers by providing clear indications when there is a moving load nearby so they can take necessary precautions and avoid harm. Proper signaling is critical; inaudible and insufficiently visible signals on the shop floor can lead to dangerous and costly accidents.

When looking to maximize safety in environments with overhead cranes, dual sounder and strobe combination signaling devices are especially recommended. There is little cost difference between combination and individual signaling devices, however, the added benefit to the user is immense. Oftentimes, workshop conditions prevent workers from either hearing or seeing a signal, but rarely prevent both. Utilizing a combination of alert technologies can therefore be beneficial in maximizing safety, without additional cost.

## ADVANTAGES OF AUDIBLE AND VISUAL SIGNALING IN OVERHEAD CRANE USE

In overhead crane applications, combination signaling devices can offer cost savings through two different avenues: reduced risk of harm to personnel and increased throughput of the factory floor. Signaling devices reduce risk to personnel by warning of impending danger so that the risk of deaths and injuries are mitigated with no lost time. This reduced risk, however, depends on the efficacy of a signaling device, based on its decibel and joules output.

Additionally, signals increase throughput by reducing the likelihood of crane downtime. If a crane is down, there is a high likelihood of significant revenue loss. Signaling a need to change conditions or perform maintenance reduces the risk of that revenue loss. State-of-the-art combination signaling devices not only warn personnel of a moving load but also use varying tones and lights to warn operators of specific conditions that can cause downtime. Signaling devices can emit specific alerts for collision

avoidance, over-speed alarms, hoist brake failure alarms, overload alarms, and over-temp VHD alarms. Businesses that rely on crane use to facilitate production can use integrated alert systems to minimize downtime, maximize worker safety, and effectively save their bottom line.

## SELECTING AND INSTALLING THE CORRECT AUDIBLE SIGNAL

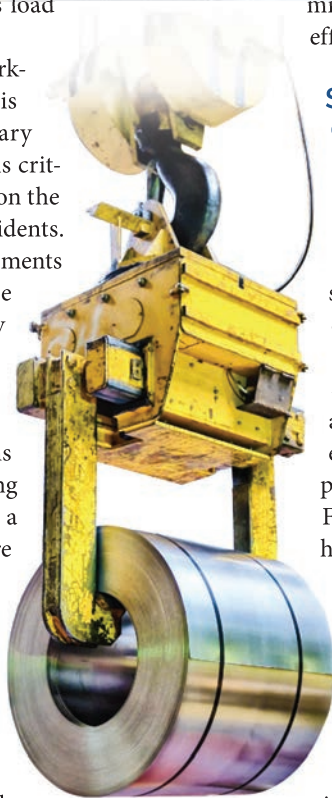
When selecting an audible signal for an overhead crane application, it is important to ensure that the signal is the correct decibel level for the given application. Factors such as machinery noise output should be taken into consideration. Determining the correct audible signal decibel level is based on the application and area in which the device will be used. Signals should be set at no less than +5dB above the application's maximum sound pressure level; however, the ideal set point is +10dB above this sound pressure level for added safety.

For example, a steel mill might have hundreds of overhead cranes used for the production and throughput of raw steel. However, it would not make sense to use the same signal on a crane in the blast furnace as the one that is used in a coil stacking yard. The latter setting would require a lower decibel level compared to the blast furnace, and using such in a blast furnace environment would augment risk in an already dangerous area. Companies that specialize in audible and visual signaling technology, like Pfannenberg, analyze years of extensive data to help determine appropriate volume levels for signaling sounders in a wide range of applications.

Once the decibel level of a sounder is determined, the next concern is the installation location. Most often, signaling devices are mounted on the moving trolley or the bridge of the crane. Additionally, it is important to mount the cone of the sounder in the same direction as the crane load, so the sound effectively reaches those within the risk path.

## SELECTING AND INSTALLING THE CORRECT VISIBLE SIGNAL

The next step is to determine the joules needed for a combination signaling device's visual signal. Sound decreases significantly over distance, and significantly louder-than-



PHOTOS COURTESY OF PFANNENBERG





**When looking to maximize safety in environments with overhead cranes, dual sounder and strobe combination signaling devices are especially recommended.**


necessary audible signals can be startling and even dangerous to workers. Light-based alerts, on the other hand, maintain their intensity over distance, providing safe and effective messaging. Visible signaling devices are thus rated by the distance they effectively reach. But unlike increasing decibel output, adding joule power (increasing intensity and brightness) can only add

to the signal’s safety factor and reduce personnel risk.

As with the audible signal, once the brightness level of a visible signal is determined, where to install the signal is the next important choice. Like audible signals, visible signaling devices are usually mounted on the moving trolley or the bridge of the crane. The pyramid shape of the strobe light should also be mounted in the direction of the load the crane is carrying to minimize risk.

**EXTREME ENVIRONMENTS DEMAND SPECIALIZED SIGNALING EQUIPMENT**

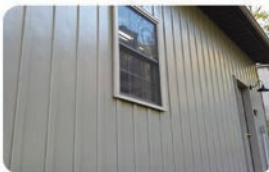

Applications with extreme environments demand specialized signaling technology. Some signaling products, like the PATROL and PYRA series signaling devices from Pfannenber, are designed for extreme high and low temperatures. These devices feature electronic board, digital sound capsule, and polycarbonate housing designs that enable them to be rated for use in -40°F to +131°F environments. Meanwhile, the company’s DS series sounders feature aluminum die-cast housings for use in areas up to +160°F. In loud environments, these same PATROL and DS series devices offer exceptionally high sound pressure outputs of and the capacity to be volume controlled up to -12dB to fit each exact application. **RF**

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# Safe Workwear

## Tips For Metal-Forming Shops

■ By Nick Warrick, All Seasons Uniforms

**C**onstruction metal forming requires delicacy, concentration, and a positive, undeviating attitude toward safety. With large machinery, sharp tools, and high temperatures, wearing protective clothes is important for your well-being.

A well-chosen outfit will protect you and enhance your work productivity. This guide examines safe workwear basics, special considerations for metal forming, and how to care for your gear.

### KEY FEATURES OF SAFE WORKWEAR

Proper workwear is the first line of defense in construction metal-forming. Selecting attire with the right features not only ensures your safety but also enhances your efficiency on the job. The following are some critical characteristics to consider when choosing protective clothing:

#### Durable and Flame-Resistant Materials

The main fabrics used to manufacture FR fabrics, such as treated cotton or Nomex, help protect workers from sparks and high temperatures frequently occurring during metal-forming. Clothing rated under NFPA 2112 or ASTM F1506 should be considered.

#### Secure and Non-Loose Fit

Loose clothes are likely to get caught in the machines, posing critical hazards. It is better to wear close-fitting coveralls or work shirts with minimal loose clothes.

#### Reinforced Protection Areas

Work pants with extra padding or

reinforcement increases durability and protection in high-wear areas like knees and elbows. These features reduce the risk of cuts or punctures when handling sharp metal edges.

#### Visibility Enhancements

High-visibility workwear with reflective strips is essential in low-light conditions or when working near moving equipment. ANSI/ISEA-certified hi-vis gear is the industrial standard of choice.

#### Breathability for Comfort

Breathability is important to avoid overheating in extreme physical operations. Advanced moisture-wicking materials will keep workers cool and comfortable throughout the day.

### SAFETY GEAR THAT GOES BEYOND CLOTHING

Workwear is only part of the solution—pair it with the right safety gear for complete protection:

#### Protective Footwear

Steel-toe boots or shoes with puncture-resistant soles protect against heavy falling objects and sharp debris. Ensure they are compliant with ASTM F2413 standards.

#### Eye and Face Protection

Most operations related to metal forming produce particles that could cause an eye injury through flying particles or hot sparks. ANSI Z87.1-rated goggles or face shields are imperative in protecting the eyes from such injuries.

#### Precision Gloves

Cut-resistant gloves, such as those made of Kevlar material, ensure dexterity and safety when handling sharp objects. Avoid gloves that are too bulky because they reduce one's precision.

#### Hearing Protection

Noise levels in a metal-forming environment can reach hazardous levels. It is essential to utilize the right hearing protection, such as earplugs or earmuffs according to OSHA standards on noise reduction.

#### Respiratory Protection

Noxious fumes and dust can lead to serious respiratory problems. Wearing an approved respirator by NIOSH has assured safe breathing conditions.

### SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FOR METAL FORMING

Because of the nature of metal forming, there are special safety concerns that are mitigated by particular choices of workwear:

#### Heat Resistance during Welding and Cutting Jobs

Flame-resistant welding jackets and aprons will be useful for jobs with high heat. Most are made of leather, which is strong and tolerant of high temperatures.

#### Avoidance of Synthetic Materials

Synthetic fibers, like polyester and nylon, may melt when exposed to heat, increasing burn risks. Choose natural fibers or synthetic blends that are FR-rated.

**Chemical-Resistant Materials**

Some metal-forming procedures require exposure to chemicals or lubricants. Wear workwear with chemical-resistant coatings for skin protection.

**Arc Flash Protection**

Arc flash-rated clothing is necessary for any workers exposed to electrical hazards. Make sure gear meets relevant safety standards, such as NFPA 70E.

**WORKWEAR MAINTENANCE AND INSPECTION**

Proper care prolongs the life of safety gear and maintains protection. It includes:

**Regular Inspections**

Inspect workwear for wear and tear or compromised protective features.

Immediately replace damaged gear to avoid accidents and fatalities.

**Proper Cleaning**

Follow the manufacturer’s cleaning guidelines, especially FR garments, to protect their fire-resistant properties. Avoid using bleach or fabric softener, as these degrade the fire-resistant fabric coatings.

**Storage Best Practices**

Workwear should be kept dry and clean, away from chemicals and exposure to sunlight to avoid degradation.

**Replace in Time**

The toughest workwear has a limited life. Replace gear that has exceeded its recommended service life or shows significant wear.

**WHY SAFE WORKWEAR IS NON NEGOTIABLE**

Workplace injuries in the metal-forming sector have substantial financial and physical impacts. OSHA reports that poor use of safety equipment or insufficient protective apparel leads to thousands of injuries in construction-related industries.

Businesses may lower these risks and employees can concentrate on productivity without sacrificing safety by investing in high-quality workwear and maintaining it properly. **RF**

*Nick Warrick is the Sales Manager at All Seasons Uniforms. With over 15 years of experience in the work uniform business, he has worked with hundreds of clients across 20 different industries.*

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# Harnessing the Power of Social Media Marketing

An interview with Jessica Haddock, S-5! Marketing Director

In today's digitally driven landscape, social media has become an indispensable tool for businesses aiming to connect with their audience on a deeper level. Few understand this better than Jessica Haddock, the Marketing Director at S-5!, a global leader in metal roof attachment solutions. In a recent interview, she shared invaluable insights into the pivotal role social media plays in their business strategy.

"For S-5!, social media is more than just a platform for broadcasting messages; it's a conduit for direct customer interaction," says Haddock. "It provides us with the opportunity to engage with customers in real-time, a practice that not only fosters trust but also positions S-5! as a leading voice in the industry. Through timely responses to queries and concerns on social media, we not only address our customer needs but also showcase our expertise, effectively enhancing brand visibility in the process."

With a global footprint, S-5! leverages social media to transcend geographical barriers and connect with audiences worldwide. Haddock highlights the immediacy of social media as a means to reach global markets.

"In an instant we can reach our target audience; there's no waiting period," adds Haddock. "You can also boost a post to



expand your audience and ask your fellow teammates to share the posts with their connections. It brings everyone in your community together and achieves an immediate response."

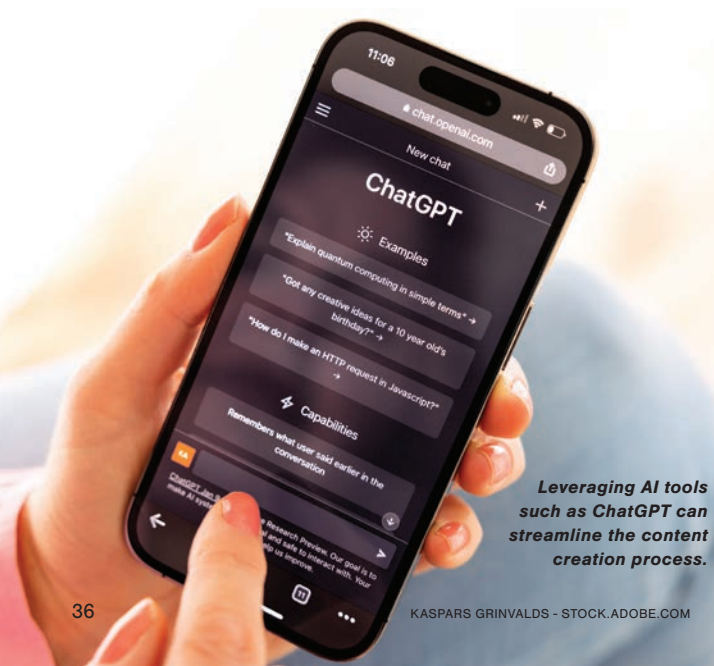
## STRATEGIC CONTENT CURATION: A BLEND OF INFORMATIVE AND ENGAGING POSTS

At the heart of S-5!'s social media strategy lies a strategic approach to content creation. They follow a well-defined schedule, encompassing a mix of product posts, how-to videos, testimonials, case studies, articles and light-hearted company updates. By striking a balance between informative and engaging content, S-5! maintains a dynamic online presence that caters to the interests of its global audience while reinforcing its brand identity and commitment to customer satisfaction.

When crafting posts, simplicity is key. Haddock advises to keep posts concise, incorporate questions and make statements to encourage audience engagement. By keeping posts succinct and engaging, businesses can effectively capture the attention of their audience amidst the digital noise.

## CONSISTENCY AND TIMING OF POSTS

Consistency is key. Haddock recommends daily posting across various platforms, including X (formerly known as Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Threads. This multi-channel approach enables S-5! to tap into diverse audience demographics, maximizing their reach across different platforms.



*Leveraging AI tools such as ChatGPT can streamline the content creation process.*

Timing matters, and S-5! has honed in on the optimal posting window. With most posts scheduled for later in the afternoon, particularly after 2:00 p.m. mountain time, they ensure maximum visibility and engagement from their audience.

## HARNESSING THE POWER OF HASHTAGS AND TAGGING

Hashtags and tagging play a pivotal role in augmenting S-5!'s social media presence and fostering collaborative partnerships within the industry. Haddock explains the strategic use of hashtags as a means to curate communities centered around specific topics or interests, thereby amplifying the reach of their posts. Similarly, tagging partner companies not only strengthens brand alliances but also facilitates cross-promotion, enabling S-5! to tap into new audiences and expand its digital footprint organically.

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***When crafting social media posts, simplicity is key.***

---

“It’s really important to make sure you know what your partner companies’ social media handles are so that you can tag them in your posts on anything in which you’re collaborating,” continues Haddock. “It builds relationships and drives traffic to your posts—a win-win situation for all.”

## EMPOWERING AI TOOLS FOR STREAMLINED CONTENT CREATION

For businesses looking to venture into social media marketing, Haddock offers practical advice. Leveraging AI tools such as ChatGPT can streamline the content creation process. These tools enable businesses to generate post ideas, tailor messaging, and even automate post scheduling, thereby alleviating the burden of content creation while ensuring consistency and relevance. By leveraging AI-powered insights, businesses can unlock new avenues for engagement and innovation in their social media activities.

Haddock says, “The upgraded version of ChatGPT is very nice because you can add specific information about a product or you can say, I have these topics I’d like to highlight for my next 10 posts, and it will generate 10 posts for you, even with hashtags. Then you can edit the content as you’d like. ChatGPT is there to make it easier for you. Then, all you have to do is sort your imagery. Additionally, Canva is a great tool for putting it all together in an infographic.”

## CONTINUOUS OPTIMIZATION THROUGH DATA-DRIVEN INSIGHTS

Central to S-5!'s social media strategy is a commitment to continuous optimization based on data and analytics. Haddock

underscores the importance of analyzing post-performance metrics and audience engagement data to refine content strategies. By leveraging insights from platforms like HubSpot, the company identifies trends, gauges audience preferences, and adapts its approach accordingly, ensuring that each post resonates effectively with its target audience and drives desired outcomes.




## BEST PERFORMING POSTS & MAIN TAKE AWAY

“When it comes to our most successful posts, videos are at the top of the list, particularly concise ones lasting no more than 60 seconds,” says Haddock. “However, what truly holds the greatest value for us are posts centered around providing exceptional customer service. At S-5!, prioritizing customer service isn’t just a practice—it’s a core value ingrained in our ethos.”

“The essence of social media lies in its capacity to facilitate meaningful customer interactions,” concludes Haddock. “By promptly addressing inquiries and concerns on our social channels, we not only enhance our responsiveness but also foster deeper engagement and satisfaction among our audience.” **RF**



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Shown with the METALCON team, Frank Stasiowski (center, holding award) was recently inducted into the Metal Construction Hall of Fame. PHOTO COURTESY OF NEUBEK PHOTOGRAPHERS.

# METALCON Founder Inducted Into the Metal Construction Hall of Fame

**F**rank A. Stasiowski, founder of METALCON, has been inducted into the Metal Construction Hall of Fame, an honor reserved for individuals whose contributions to the metal construction industry have had a transformative and lasting impact. This recognition celebrates his visionary leadership, innovation, and ongoing efforts to advance the industry.

In 1991, Stasiowski established METALCON, the only global event dedicated to the application of metal in design and construction. The annual trade show and conference, which is produced by PSMJ Resources and sponsored by the Metal Construction Association, has become the industry's premier gathering, showcasing the latest products, solutions, innovations and

game-changing technologies.

He is also the founder, owner and CEO of PSMJ Resources, the world's premier authority, publisher and consultant on the effective management of architecture, engineering and construction (A/E/C) firms—serving more than 33,000 firms in 23 countries over the past 50 years.

Throughout his career, Stasiowski has founded and led multiple tradeshow and conferences, but METALCON stands as his signature achievement. The event has brought together thousands of people each year, offering a critical platform for networking, education and business development.

Under his leadership, the METALCON team works hard every year to deliver new programming. It also provides an invaluable service as the number

one networking event for the metal construction industry. During the off-season, Stasiowski and his team host METALCON Online to continue to provide year-round educational programming and networking opportunities, ensuring the industry remains connected and informed.

Stasiowski is part of the 12th class of inductees to the Metal Construction Hall of Fame, which was established in 2012 to recognize those who have made exceptional contributions to the metal construction industry. His leadership has provided a vital venue for thousands of industry professionals to gather, exchange ideas, discover new products and solutions, train and educate staff (often attaining required continuing education credits to maintain

accreditation), and foster relationships that drive business success.

In his cornerstone position at PSMJ, Stasiowski serves as a trusted advisor, strategist and counselor to A/E/C firms. He is actively involved on the boards of prominent A/E/C firms and serves as a personal advisor to CEOs, helping them navigate long-term growth strategies and overcome organizational challenges.

As an author of hundreds of articles and numerous books on the management of A/E/C firms, he is a respected thought leader and frequent speaker at industry events, often addressing audiences of up to 5,000+. As a licensed architect and fellow with the American Institute of Architects, Stasiowski was one of the first to be named a fellow for his work in educating architects on the business side of architecture.

“Frank’s visionary yet pragmatic


leadership, accomplishments and contributions to society have placed him in a category all by himself,” says Dusty Rood, president and CEO of Rodgers Consulting. “He is a legend who has moved individuals, organizations and industries to be better than they even realized was possible; he certainly did that for me and my organization.”

Beyond his professional accomplishments, he is deeply committed to philanthropy. He and his team support numerous charitable efforts, including METALCON’s annual “Giving Back” program, which raised \$5000 in 2024 for the Semper Fi & America’s Fund, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping service members in all branches of the United States Armed Forces.

Stasiowski also co-founded the Gulf Coast Rebuilding Fund with his wife Joan,

in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. This non-profit raised significant funds to help design and rebuild community centers in the hardest-hit communities, including the Bay St. Louis Community Center in Mississippi.

“It is a great honor to be inducted into the Metal Construction Hall of Fame,” said Stasiowski. “However, this achievement is truly a reflection of the hard work and dedication of my team. The success would not have been possible without the leadership of Claire Kilcoyne, our former show director and Judy Geller our current vice president of trade shows, who has taken the event to new heights. I truly believe that a leader’s true strength lies in the talent, passion and commitment of their team, and I am deeply grateful for and incredibly proud of the exceptional people who have made this journey possible.” **RF**



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# The Chevrolets of the Roll-Forming World

Marion Manufacturing's machines just keep on rolling!

■ By Linda Schmid

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Starting out as a tool and die company in 1979 in the town of Marion, Kansas, Marion Manufacturing has been involved in many markets over the years. They include manufacturing components for Coleman, Rubbermaid, acid machines for batteries, items and trim for the automation industry and more. Jack Richmond and his wife Joyce were the founders and they were very inventive.

In 1992, a friend in Texas asked them to build him a roll-forming machine. Since then, they have been building machines in this niche including panel roll forming, trim roll forming, coil handling, controls, shears and more.

The first machines they built are still running today according to Tim Richmond, part owner along with three siblings who purchased the company

from their parents 20 years ago. The company grew through word of mouth he said, as people saw that they built good, solid machines.

"Our machines are the Chevrolets of roll forming, not the Cadillacs," Richmond said, "because they are more economical and still produce quality work after all these years."

## MARION TODAY

Roll forming machines are 75% of what the company fabricates now. They also make shear blades, slitter blades, and products for adjacent industries. They supply all the U.S. and Canada. Along with machines that display great longevity, the company delivers great customer service to all their customers. They serve roofing contractors, post-frame contractors, do-it-yourselfers, mom and pop panel shops, and big corporations, too.

## CHALLENGES, SOLUTIONS, AND OPPORTUNITIES

Richmond finds that the biggest challenges come from the automation aspect of their work. It is hard to find engineers, electricians, and mechanical tradesmen to pull it all together. They have worked with outside vendors, groups that do electrical engineering. These engineers are hard to come by because they are so in demand; Richmond said everyone needs them.

The company now has 25 employees, and the majority of them were hired and trained into their roles. Many of their key positions have been filled by people who worked their way up. A great benefit package is part of what attracts people as is their culture, in which employees are a big group of friends, Richmond said. Everybody is friendly and believes in what they are doing.



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They have company events; often Richmond makes everyone biscuits and gravy, and during the winter months, employees take turns making a pot of chili nearly every week, so they get to try a variety of recipes.

The company is located in a rural community, many of the employees are friends, and that spirit of comradeship and helpfulness permeates the work culture as well.

Richmond said that he learned to lead the company through the school of hard knocks. One of the things he has realized over the years is that a good documentation system can help any company. Document processes so that if someone leaves, the process doesn't leave with them. Document meetings so everyone is clear on the outcome and what the plan is. Document everything; it doesn't take

much time as you go, and it can save a lot of time in the long run.

Cross-train more employees on various processes so that when an employee is out for the day, it doesn't mean work comes to a halt or quality goes out the window.

"The more everyone knows, the better. Get people out of their comfort zone and give them opportunities to learn other things. They become more valuable, the company is better for it, and they may even think of a great improvement. Never be afraid to learn something new," Richmond continued. "It's a good day when I learn something new."

### THE INDUSTRY

"Currently we are quoting 18-month delivery on new machines, compared to our usual 6-8 months, and we are quoting new machines every day. Demand

is high," Richmond said, "and it looks like it will stay high for at least the next three years. There are so many people starting in the industry and a lot of older machines are being rebuilt."

Richmond said he is not worried about new tariffs affecting the industry negatively. Some tariffs are already in place, and while they buy as much American made steel as they can, tariffs haven't slowed business down so far.

"The costs of materials never really go down," Richmond said. "Materials go up, then flatten. Then materials go up, then flatten. It's about twice the price since the COVID-19 era and it hasn't stopped anyone from roll forming or building."

Marion's goals are to keep growing, to keep making good equipment and to keep helping their customers to keep on rolling. **RF**

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# Equipment Showcase

## Metal-Forming Equipment Sightings At METALCON 2024

■ By Karen Knapstein

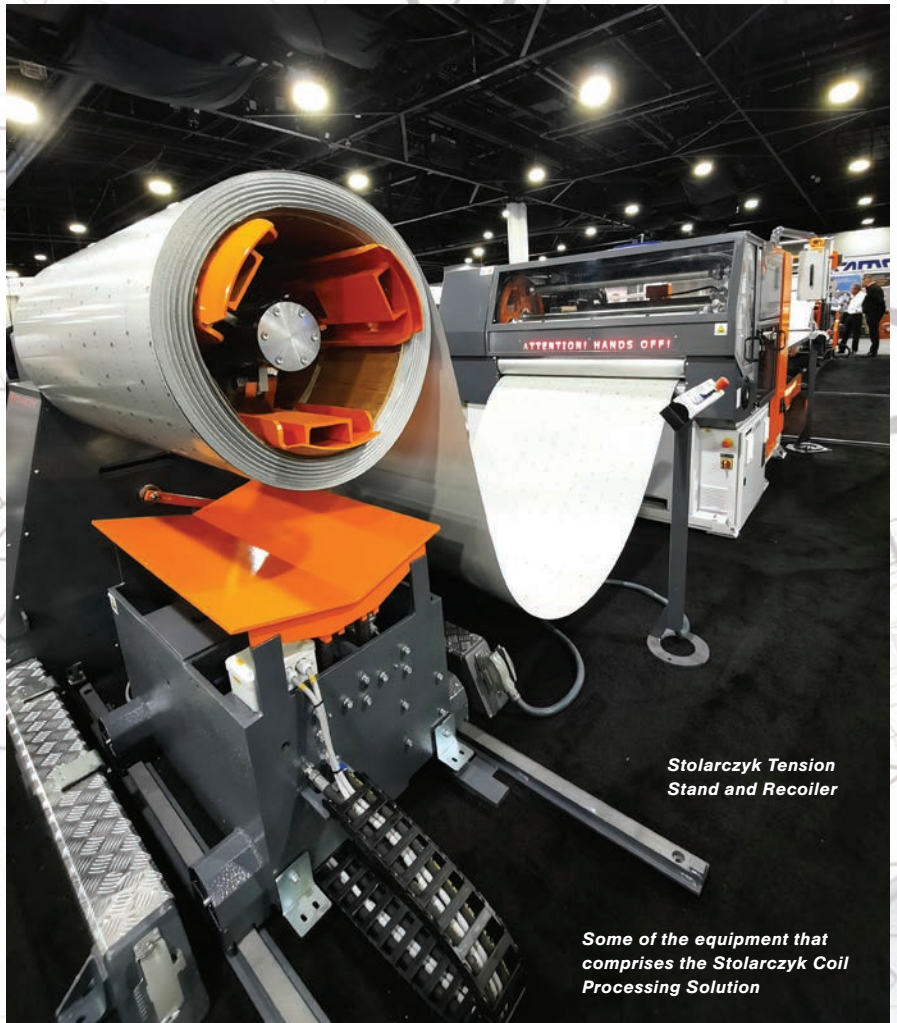
**M**ETALCON 2024 was held October 30-November 1 at the Atlanta World Congress Center. Large sections of the show floor were filled with metal-forming equipment. For those of you who were unable to attend, here's a brief glimpse of some of the equipment that was on display and demonstrated.

Each year, METALCON exhibitors are invited to nominate their standout

products for the event's Top Products Award. Winners were determined via an electronic voting process, which took place before and during the event, with more than 1,100 votes from industry professionals.

MetalForming, LLC, won a Top Product Award for the Stolarczyk Coil Processing Solution. The system combines advanced technology, ease of use and robust performance in

a single, comprehensive system. It features a Decoiler with 7-roll CNC straightening system and laser-hardened rolls to eliminate coil set and ensure flat sheets, along with a 3-roll rotating film application for surface protection. The system's Slitting-Cutting section (ST-1250) uses large-diameter slitting knives (over 8") and a digital positioning system for precise cuts, while heavy-duty guillotine shears with 4-sided blades



*Stolarczyk Tension Stand and Recoiler*

*Some of the equipment that comprises the Stolarczyk Coil Processing Solution*

handle length cuts. The Stacking Table automatically lowers as stack height increases, with adjustable side and end stops for alignment. The system smoothly transitions into a high-speed Tension Stand & Recoiler at up to 150 feet per minute with easy one-person operation.

Next year, METALCON returns to the Las Vegas Convention Center. Show dates are October 21-23, 2025. **RF**



**Combilift exhibited two equipment solutions. Machines are available in diesel, LPG, and electric.**



**Eckhold metal-forming machines were on hand to try out in the Tennsmith exhibit.**



**ASCO Machines exhibited the Slinet coil farm and the V25 long folder, among other machines.**

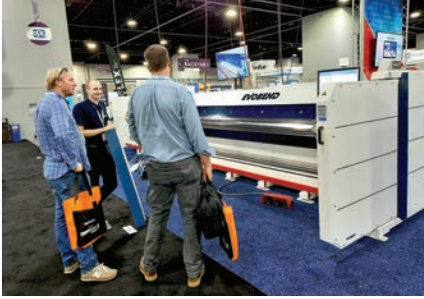


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## Business Building ))



*The EvoBend bidirectional folder from Tennsmith.*



*The Variobend long folder from Hershey's Metal Meister.*



*The Metal Man Multi Panel machine by Englert.*



*The Board and Batten profile in metal has become very popular among builders, so there is a lot of interest in Board and Batten machines, including Roll Former LLC's new machine.*



*The Biegemaster XBEND long folder, offered by The Bradbury Group.*

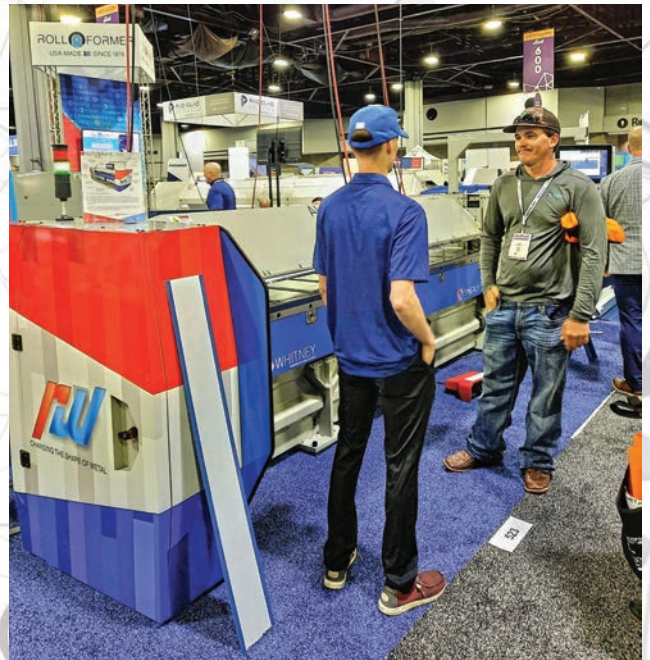


*New Tech Machinery is developing its new machine with the help of extensive customer feedback. Customers are helping to determine the new features.*





Beck Automation exhibited a robot, showing an even higher level of automation than usual.



The Autobrake Flex by Roper Whitney.



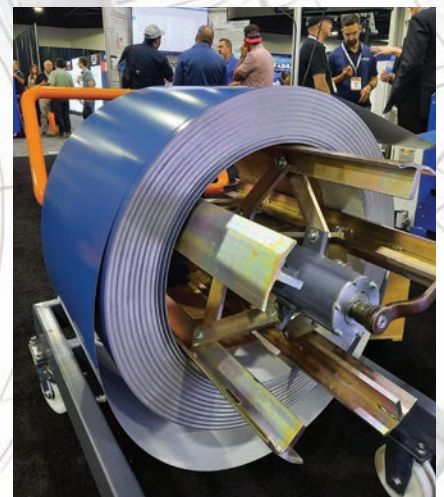
CIDAN had a full compliment of metal-working machines at work.



An up-close look at a Schlebach machine from MetalForming.



New Tech Machinery gutter machine.



Offered by MetalForming, the the Stolarczyk LIL Bob Decoiler has a capacity of one ton.



SWI Machinery Duplex Long Folder.



SWI Machinery's CX5 coil farm demonstration was impressive.



Another view of the SWI CX5 coil farm at work.



Close-up view of a Schechtl TBS Mobile Swivel Bending Machine.



Schechtl manual hand brake on display in the MetalForming exhibit.



An attendee tries his hand with a Van Mark manual brake.



The Schechtl MAX sheet metal folder was demonstrated throughout the course of the show.

# Trends In Building Types

One of the trends that crosses our magazine titles is small contractors trying to do what they need to be successful. That often includes multiple types of construction.

The industry data shows some interesting trends.

One is that it appears easier to migrate from larger buildings or general construction to smaller buildings and sheds than the other way.

Some examples:

Of the respondents listing Post-Frame as their primary business, 32% build sheds.

Of the respondents listing Cold-Formed Metal Buildings as their primary business, 29% build sheds.

Of the respondents listing Pre-Engineered Metal Buildings as their primary business, 23% build sheds.

Of the respondents listing General Roofing as their primary

business, 12% build sheds.

Conversely of the respondents listing Sheds as their primary business:

- 11% build post-frame
- 0% build cold formed metal buildings
- 0% build pre-engineered metal buildings
- 0% do general roofing.

The one construction method that bucks the trend is Wood Framed (stick built) construction; 16% of the respondents listing Wood Framed as their primary business build sheds. While 33% of the respondents listing Sheds as their primary business build wood framed construction.

It will be interesting to watch how these trends develop over time with the increasing market share and new applications for post-frame and cold-formed metal construction. **RF**

## Which of these building types do you participate in?

Which of these best describes your primary area of construction?	General Roofing	Metal Roofing	Other Roofing (Gutters)	Post-Frame	Metal Building (Cold-Formed)
General Roofing		53%	28%	20%	19%
Metal Roofing	21%		30%	23%	19%
Other Roofing (gutters)	25%	33%		17%	8%
Post Frame	16%	44%	8%		8%
Metal Building (cold-formed)	29%	57%	29%	14%	
Metal Building (Pre-engineered)	31%	23%	31%	8%	54%
Roll forming or metal forming	14%	64%	29%	36%	36%
Wood framed (stick built)	39%	29%	21%	32%	13%
Other Building (sheds and carports)	0%	22%	0%	11%	0%

Which of these best describes your primary area of construction?	Metal Building (pre-engineered)	Roll forming or metal forming	Wood framed (stick built)	Other Building (sheds and carports)
General Roofing	22%	19%	18%	12%
Metal Roofing	19%	26%	2%	9%
Other Roofing (gutters)	8%	8%	0%	0%
Post Frame	16%	16%	40%	32%
Metal Building (cold-formed)	57%	29%	43%	29%
Metal Building (Pre-engineered)		38%	8%	23%
Roll forming or metal forming	29%		14%	14%
Wood framed (stick built)	13%	5%		16%
Other Building (sheds and carports)	0%	0%	33%	



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