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Rollforming Magazine

EXCLUSIVELY DEVOTED TO CONSTRUCTION ROLL-FORMING PROFESSIONALS

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Magazine

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2026
Vol. 9, No. 1

**10
TIPS
FOR SAFER
GENERATOR
USAGE**

**METAL SHOP
ACCESSORIES FOR
A SMOOTH WORKFLOW**

**LEASING
EQUIPMENT**
WHAT YOU NEED
TO KNOW

**HYDRAULIC
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Your Story, Our Pages

■ By Karen Knapstein

In this issue, you'll find our Way We Roll feature highlights Metal Systems LLC. Kyle Garber and I first connected at a trade show (I believe it was last year's Construction Rollforming Show), where he mentioned that he'd be interested in having his company featured in a business profile. Honestly, that quick conversation — and him handing me a business card and saying, "I'd like to talk about that" — was all it took to get the ball rolling.

From there, we scheduled a phone interview, Kyle shared a few photos, and I wrote the article. That's it. It really is that easy. Here are some of the benefits companies enjoy by being featured in a Way We Roll profile:

A feature gives your company **added exposure** within the roll-forming and metal building industry. These profiles highlight your history, growth, products, and philosophy — and they're also posted online, making them accessible to a wide audience.

Way We Roll gives you a chance to **tell your origin story** and explain what sets your business apart, whether that's your services, equipment investments, or customer-first approach.

Profiles allow you to **showcase your product lines**, markets served, and specialized capabilities, helping customers and industry partners better understand what you do and the value you bring.

Because Way We Roll is part of Rollforming Magazine's business profile series, it helps position featured companies as respected, established members of the industry.

Many profiles also touch on challenges, growth strategies, and future plans, giving readers insight into where your business is headed.

In short, a Way We Roll feature **helps companies boost visibility, share their story, highlight their strengths, and build credibility** — all with an audience that values real-world industry experience.

If you'd like your company to be featured in a Way We Roll article, just drop me a note and we'll get rolling! **RF**



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Gary Reichert,
 Publisher, Shield Wall Media

On The Cover:

A New Tech Machinery SSQ3
 exhibited at IRE 2026.

Photo by Shield Wall Media

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Rollforming Magazine (ISSN: 2639-6742) (Volume 9, Issue 1) is published six times per year (March, May, July, September, November and December) by Shield Wall Media LLC, 150 Depot St., Iola, WI 54945. Periodical postage paid at Iola, WI, and at additional mailing offices. Canadian Agreement Number: 40665675. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Rollforming, Camin Potts, PO BOX 255, Iola, WI 54945. Copyright 2026 Shield Wall Media LLC. Rollforming Magazine and its logo are registered trademarks. Other names and logos referred to or displayed in editorial or advertising content may be trademarked or copyright. Rollforming Magazine assumes no responsibility for unsolicited materials sent to it. Publisher and advertisers are not liable for typographical errors that may appear in prices or descriptions in advertisements. Mailed free to roll forming contractors and their suppliers throughout North America. Others may subscribe: \$19.98 for 1 year, \$36.98 for 2 years, and \$50.98 for 3 years.



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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.”

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

SPOT IRON ORE

The Platts, Spot Iron Ore report for the week ending January 9 reports that pricing spot iron ore increased for the fifth consecutive week.

Spot iron ore pricing ended the week at \$107.85/mt, up from \$107.13/mt the previous week. This is the highest price for iron ore since July 2024.

Restocking by Chinese steel producers in December, along with ramping of blast furnace production has helped push pricing up.

DOMESTIC STEEL PRODUCTION

According to the American Iron & Steel Institute, Weekly Domestic Steel Production report dated January 6, domestic raw steel production held relatively flat despite the New Year holiday.

U.S. mills produced an estimated 1,704k tons at a 74.4% utilization rate, up slightly from 1,695k tons and a 74.0% rate previously.

Both the Christmas and New Year holidays capped production to end the year. Production rose in four of the five regions, with the largest increase (in tons) coming from the Northeast region.

Production in the Southern region spiked from 108k tons to 121k tons.

Raw steel production ended the year at 89,894k tons, up slightly from 88,489k tons in 2024.

ZINC PRICE & INVENTORY

According to the London Metal Exchange, Weekly Zinc Price and Inventory Report and the Shanghai Futures Exchange, Weekly Zinc Inventory Report, both dated January 9, zinc pricing settled flat after a sharp increase to start the new year.

Zinc pricing ended the week at \$3,101/mt (\$1.407/lb), flat from \$3,105/mt (\$1.408/lb) previously.

Zinc is expected to have upward momentum through the first half of the year, as pockets of demand open in construction and manufacturing, and as supply remains constrained.

Global zinc inventory increased for the fourth consecutive week. LME warehouse inventory increased, climbing from 107,625 metric tons to 108,000 metric tons. Shanghai warehouse inventory increased as well, climbing from 69,793 metric tons to 73,852 metric tons.

DODGE MOMENTUM INDEX

A key leading indicator for future non-residential construction spending, rebounded in December after a slight decline in November.

The December Dodge Momentum Index came in at 296.8, up 7.0% from November.

Within the index both the commercial planning and institutional planning components increased, climbing 3.5% and 14.9%, respectively.

The commercial planning component was led by strong momentum from warehouses, office buildings, and data centers.

The institutional planning component showed the strongest growth from education and recreational building planning.

For the full year 2025, the DMI was up 37% from 2024, with the commercial portion up 35% and the institutional portion up 43%. **RF**

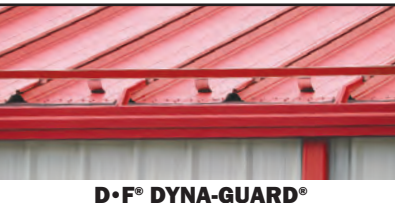
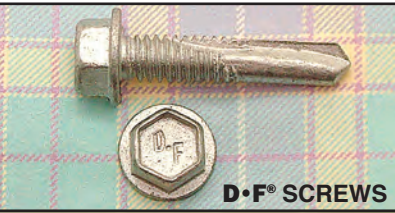
The Majestic Steel USA Core Report library can be accessed at <https://www.majesticsteel.com/majestic-insights/core-report/>.

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Power Safety

10 Tips for Safer Generator Usage

■ By The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI)

Generators are critical during severe weather events, when the power can go out. They can bring power to remote job sites, aid in disaster recovery and assist businesses in emergencies. The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI, www.opei.org), an international trade association representing power equipment, small engine, utility vehicle, golf car and personal transport vehicle manufacturers and suppliers, reminds home and business owners to keep safety in mind when using generators.

“Not having power when you need it is frustrating, so a generator can provide emergency backup power at a reasonable cost,” says Kris Kiser, President and CEO of OPEI. “It’s important to follow all manufacturer’s instructions, and never place a generator in a garage or inside office or building. It should be a safe distance from the structure and not near an air intake.”

Additional tips include:

#1 - Take stock of your generator. Make sure equipment is in good working order before starting and using it. Do this before a storm hits.

#2 - Review the directions. Follow all manufacturer’s instructions. Review the owner’s manuals (look manuals up online if you cannot find them) so equipment is operated safely.

#3 - Install a battery-operated carbon monoxide detector in your office. This alarm will sound if dangerous levels of carbon monoxide enter the building.

#4 - Have the right fuel on hand. Use the type of fuel recommended by the generator manufacturer to protect this important investment. It is illegal to use any fuel with more than 10% ethanol in outdoor power equipment. (For more information on proper fueling for outdoor power equipment visit <https://www.opei.org/programs/ethanolwarning/>.) It’s best to use fresh fuel, but if you are using fuel that has been sitting in a gas can for more than 30 days, add fuel stabilizer to it. Store gas only in an approved container and away from heat sources.

#5 - Ensure portable generators have plenty of ventilation. Generators should NEVER be used in an enclosed area or placed inside an office, building, or a garage, even if the windows or



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE OUTDOOR POWER EQUIPMENT INSTITUTE

doors are open. Place the generator outside and away from windows, doors, and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to drift indoors.

#6 - Keep the generator dry. Do not use a generator in wet conditions. Cover and vent a generator. Model-specific tents or generator covers can be found online for purchase and at home centers and hardware stores.

#7 - Only add fuel to a cool generator. Before refueling, turn the generator off and let it cool down.

#8 - Plug in safely. If you don’t yet have a transfer switch, you can use the outlets on the generator. It’s best to plug in appliances directly to the generator. If you must use an extension cord, it should be heavy-duty and designed for outdoor use. It should be rated (in watts or amps) at least equal to the sum of the connected appliance loads. Make sure the cord is free of cuts, and the plug has all three prongs.

#9 - Install a transfer switch. A transfer switch connects the generator to the circuit panel and lets you power hardwired appliances. Most transfer switches also help avoid overload by displaying wattage usage levels.

#10 - Do not use the generator to “backfeed” power into your business electrical system. Trying to power your electrical wiring by “backfeeding” – where you plug the generator into a wall outlet – is dangerous. You could hurt utility workers and neighbors served by the same transformer. Backfeeding bypasses built-in circuit protection devices, so you could damage your electronics or start an electrical fire. **RF**



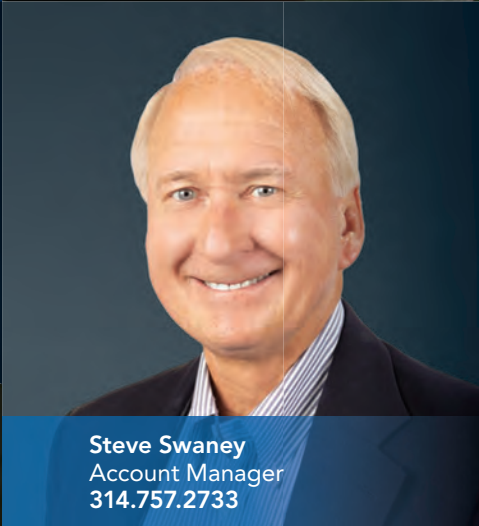
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SIMPSON STRONG-TIE PFUD™ UNDERSADDLE HANGERS

Simpson Strong-Tie is simplifying post-frame construction with the launch of two PFUD™ undersaddle hangers. The hangers feature a two-sided design so that one hanger supports ceiling joists on each side of a truss instead of requiring a separate face-mounted hanger for each joist. The continuous seat fits snugly under the truss's bottom chord, automatically aligning parts vertically for an easier, faster layout. For single-side applications, installers simply bend and separate the hanger along the perforations to create two face-mounted options.

“PFUD undersaddle hangers are extremely versatile, streamlining installation to reduce connector layout labor costs by half versus using two face-mounted hangers,” said Randy Daudet, group product manager for Simpson Strong-Tie. “At the same time, the hangers offer greater reliability and load capacity than toenailed ceiling joists.”

The hangers are fully tested and code listed. They're load rated for joist tension forces, so they're ideal with ceiling panels acting as diaphragms or for bottom-chord truss bracing. Two options are available: The PFUD24 fits one-ply trusses, and the PFUDS24 fits two-ply trusses.

www.strongtie.com



SIMPSON STRONG-TIE CONCRETE CRACK REPAIR KIT

Simpson Strong-Tie is expanding its line of structural injection epoxies with a new contractor kit, CI-LVPO-KT. Previously, the company's structural injection solution only came either in bulk gallons for use with metered dispensing equipment on large commercial projects or in small DIY-friendly kits. The new CI-LVPO-KT offers contractors the convenience and the necessary materials for a commercial-grade structural concrete repair solution.

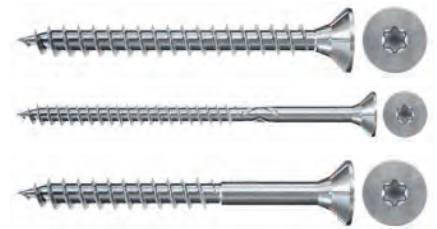
CI-LV™ low-viscosity structural injection epoxy is a two-component, high-modulus, high-solids, moisture-tolerant epoxy specially designed for filling concrete cracks and for increasing the bond between freshly placed repair mortars or concrete mixes and existing concrete. The epoxy chemically bonds with the concrete to provide a structural repair while sealing the crack from moisture and protecting rebar in the concrete from corrosion. CI-LV comes in side-by-side cartridges dispensed through a static mixing nozzle that ensures the precise combination of each component.

Each CI-LVPO-KT package offers enough adhesive and accessories to repair about 30 feet of concrete. The kit comes with four cartridges of CI-LV low-viscosity structural injection epoxy and two cartridges of CI-PO™ paste-over and structural repair epoxy, as well as flush-mount injection ports, corner-mount/drilled-in injection ports, injec-

tion fittings and mixing nozzles. It's also available in a CI-LVPO-KT-TL kit that includes an ADT30S manual dispensing tool.

It's moisture tolerant and can be used on dry and damp surfaces; freeze/thaw resistant; nonshrink; and resistant to oils, salts and mild chemicals. Its low surface tension allows the material to effectively penetrate narrow cracks.

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FISCHER NEW CLASSICFAST II SCREW GENERATION

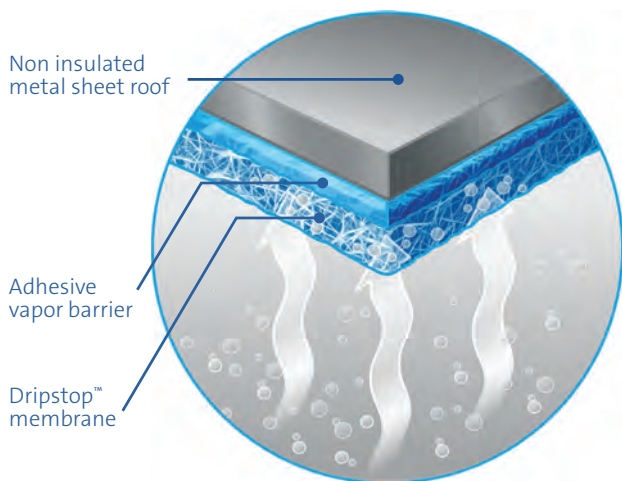
fischer has introduced the ClassicFast II series, a new line of universal chipboard screws designed for use across a wide range of wood-based materials, including applications requiring load-bearing performance. The screws are CE-marked to EN 14592, confirming their suitability for structural timber connections. Key features include a TX star recess drive for secure bit engagement and efficient power transmission, zinc-plated steel with blue passivation for improved corrosion protection, and a countersunk head with milling ribs that allows the screw to sit cleanly and flush with the wood surface—an advantage in visible applications such as interior finishes and furniture. Partial-thread versions 70 mm and longer incorporate an integrated shank cutter to reduce driving torque and ease installation, while the optimized tip and thread geometry helps the screws start quickly and fasten reliably. The line includes full-thread screws in diameters from 3 to 5 mm and lengths from 16 to 60 mm, as well as partial-thread options from 3 to 6 mm in diameters and 35 to 200 mm in lengths.

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Roper Whitney

Turning Challenges Into Opportunities for 115 Years

■ By Linda Schmid

In 1910, William A. Whitney broke away from an established metal manufacturing company and founded the Whitney Metal Tool Company in Rockford, Illinois. This new venture manufactured punching hand tools, for which William Whitney held the patent. Initially, the company focused on manufacturing assorted metal fabrication tools and shears alongside the punching hand tools, all items which were familiar to Whitney. To get the business rolling, he went from business to business selling tools from the back of his car.

Whitney had nineteen patents by the end of his career, some of which were purportedly used in the construction of skyscrapers, including the Chrysler Building, completed in 1930.

STAYING RELEVANT

In order to survive, a company has to remain relevant, offering solutions, and yet better solutions to help their customers succeed. This company has done exactly that. Over the years, they have expanded their product line, driven by



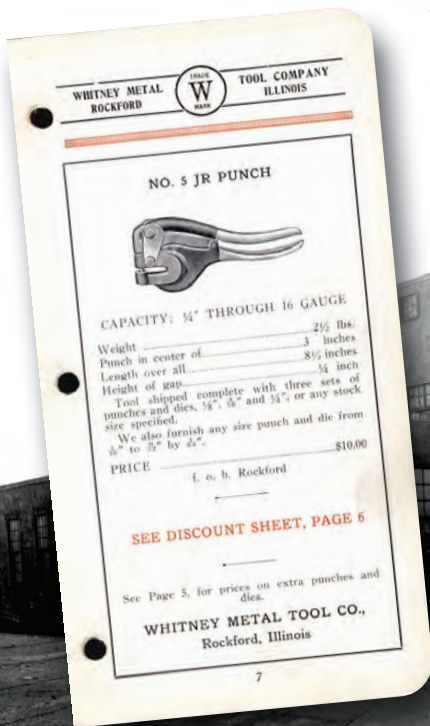
The car from which William A. Whitney sold tools, circa 1910. PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROPER WHITNEY

the needs of the industry and the country, according to Brian McVey, Engineer. During the World Wars the company won military accounts, some of which are still active today.

In 1961, Roper Industries bought the company, and they changed the name to Roper Whitney. In 1967, construction began on the building the company currently occupies; it was completed in 1968. Then, in the 1970s the company acquired a few more businesses, including PEXTO, a manufacturer

(LEFT) The Whitney Metal Tool Company Catalog, 1934.

(BELOW) The Original Whitney Metal Company headquarters.



Company Profile))



An employee working the assembly line.

of sheet metal and woodworking tools that was started in 1785. PEXTO brought tools to the product lineup that are still manufactured today: the PS-66 Notcher, No. 383 Manual Roll Bending Machine, No. 622 Combination Rotary Machine, the No. 3617 Powered Combination Rotary Machine, and the PH-52 Hydraulic Shear.

As time went on, the company's new machines have gotten bigger and bigger, and they have gone from manual to steam power to electric, and eventually in the '80s and '90s they began making some of the CNC machines they still make today. Yet, technology doesn't stand still, and the tools are becoming progressively automated.

For all the innovation, some tools remain classics. In fact, one of their signature products is the Junior #5 Hole Punch manufactured by Whitney Metal Company, which is pictured in their 1934 catalog. This portable, hand-operated tool forces a punch pin through a substrate. It can be used instead of a drill and screw for tasks like fastening metal seams.

"You can find Junior #5 hole punches all over," said Amanda Johnson, Sales and Marketing Manager. "They are indestructible, and they are still sold."

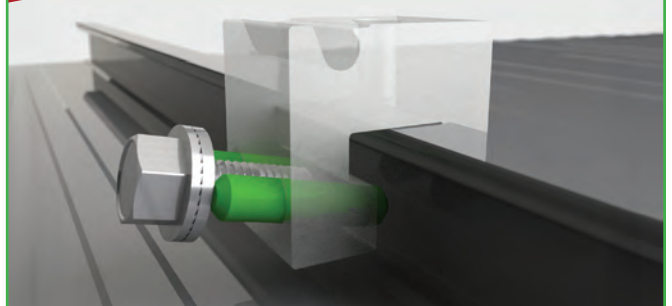
On the other hand, another of their signature products is their highly automated AutoBrake® Folder, powered by an advanced CNC system. They have many products including shears, coil processing machines, notchers, benders, roll formers, and more.

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Like many other companies in today's business world, Roper Whitney has found it challenging to keep its skilled trades positions filled. However, they use the same philosophy internally that they present to customers to address that workforce deficit. Their manufacturing automation has created efficiencies that allow their 75 to 80 employees to produce more than the workforce they employed in the '80s, which is estimated to have been three to four times as many.

The recession that occurred in that timeframe threatened their success, but they adapted by expanding beyond the roofing and construction industry. They currently serve

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Company Profile))

several markets including industrial and custom fabrication, automotive, aerospace, and sign manufacturing as well as architectural metal and roofing.

In the early '90s, as computers gained in popularity, they worked on automation to remain competitive. This challenge has led to continuous improvement for the company.

The COVID-19 era challenged everyone with supply chain disruptions. The purchasing people attacked the problem by finding alternative suppliers while the engineering team got creative, finding alternative ways to create tools and machines.

While challenges are ever-present, this crew pulls together and transforms them into opportunities that propel the company forward.

COMPANY CULTURE

Still family-owned, the company retains that relaxed, close-knit atmosphere where everyone pulls together and every employee has the opportunity to have an important impact on outcomes, Andrea Negrini, Director of Operations, said. Yet, they compete with companies that dwarf them in size. This combination of connection paired with drive works well for them; employees tend to stay in their employ. They have people who have been with them for upwards of twenty, thirty, forty, even fifty years.

The company is owned by Tennsmith, a manufacturer that has been around since the '30s; they specialize in manual tools such as hand brakes, roll bending machines, and slitters. Roper Whitney's sister company is Roll Former LLC and true to their name they produce roll formers including custom trim machines. This triad of companies works well together; they share knowledge, engineering, and service. Between them they have so many options that they find they are more competitive as a team at trade shows than as individual companies.



The AutoMax Folding Machine.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The Roper Whitney team sees ever more automation coming to the industry.

“Machines have to compensate for the fact that there are fewer and fewer people to bend the metal,” Negrini said. “AI may play a role on the control side, but it cannot replace all humans. You still need humans to operate the machines.”

The company will continue doing what it is good at: modernizing and adding new, more efficient machinery with greater safety features, both in their own production process and their product lines.

Change is necessary, according to Negrini. Companies need to push their products to be better and better and expand their offerings, he added. That is how Roper Whitney not only survives challenges, but grows through them. **RF**



The Roper Whitney Sales and Marketing Team.

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Leasing/Financing Equipment

Making It Work for You

■ By Linda Schmid

For many rollformers, acquiring new equipment isn't a question of whether the machine will pay for itself – it's a question of how to finance it without choking cash flow or limiting growth. Between roll-forming lines, decoilers, controls, software, accessories, electrical upgrades, shipping, training, and the constant need to expand capacity, capital demands can add up quickly. That's why most roll forming businesses finance equipment rather than paying cash, even when they could.

LEASING OR FINANCING?

One of the most persistent misconceptions in the industry is the idea that “leasing” is the default path. In reality, the majority of rollformers are not leasing in the traditional sense. Most are financing their machines using an EFA (Equipment Finance Agreement) or CFA (Commercial Finance Agreement). These structures function much like loans and result in 100% ownership at the end of the term. The borrower has legal ownership of the machine throughout the term while the lender holds a lien on the asset until the term is paid in full. In today's market, true leases—where the customer has the option to return the equipment—are rare in roll forming and often the wrong tool for the job.

That distinction matters because roll-forming equipment holds its value unusually well. Five years into service, many machines still retain a large percentage of their original value. A true fair-market-value lease, also called an operating or tax lease, requires the customer to buy the machine at its actual market value at the end of the term. For



Equipment can be costly, but financing can make it more accessible.
PHOTOS COURTESY OF METAL ROLLFORMING SYSTEMS.



a \$400,000 roll former, that can mean paying for the machine twice—once through payments and again at buyout. For that reason, FMV leases are generally discouraged for roll-forming equipment unless an accountant specifically requires off-balance-sheet treatment for tax purposes.

Dollar-buyout leases, often referred to as capital leases, are closer to financing than leasing. They are treated tax-wise like loans, require the customer to

purchase the equipment at the end for a nominal amount, and are not truly off-balance sheet. Even so, they have become less common than straightforward equipment finance agreements, which eliminate the buyout step entirely.

SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT FINANCE COMPANY OR BANK?

The appeal of specialized equipment finance companies is not just structure, but flexibility. Firms that focus on

RESOURCES

- Michelle D. Sherman, Apex Capital Group, www.financewithapex.com, Partner of ASC Machine Tools Inc.
- Mickey Phelps, Jules and Associates, www.julesandassociates.com, Partner of Marion Manufacturing
- Bill Griffin, Metal Rollforming Systems, www.mrsrollform.com

industrial and manufacturing equipment understand roll-forming machinery, its resale value, and its longevity. That familiarity allows them to structure deals creatively and move faster than traditional banks, which may offer slightly better headline rates but will also likely have underwriting processes that require deeper documentation and longer approval cycles.

GETTING APPROVED

For established rollformers, approvals can be surprisingly simple. Depending on transaction size, underwriting may hinge on time in business, cash flow, the company’s payment history, and owner credit. Payment history is often the strongest indicator. Larger transactions receive more scrutiny, but roll-forming equipment itself works in the borrower’s favor. In the eyes of lenders, roll formers are considered A-class assets—durable,

versatile machines that serve multiple industries and perform reliably for years.

That asset strength opens doors for newer businesses. Many lenders prefer three years of operating history, but some equipment financiers offer startup programs, typically leaning more heavily on personal credit and prior industry experience. In construction roll forming, startups are rarely starting from zero. Many owners come from roofing, construction, installation backgrounds, or other roll-forming shops, and that experience counts. Startup financing is often capped in the \$100,000 to \$200,000 range, but it can be enough to get a shop off the ground.

FINANCING THAT WORKS FOR YOU

Another major advantage of specialized equipment financiers is payment customization. Deferred payment

programs may be available while machines are being built or installed, or while operators work through the learning curve. Some structures allow reduced payments for the first six months or even the first year, stepping up later once production stabilizes. Seasonal structures are also widely used. In colder climates, some rollformers make minimal payments during winter months—sometimes as low as \$100—then resume full payments during the rest of the year. These arrangements can be set for the entire term, not just the first year, aligning payments with real cash flow.

Most financiers have term limits. Financing agreements can last up to ten years for very expensive machines; the majority have terms ranging from five to ten years.

Financing can extend beyond the machine itself. Many agreements allow soft costs to be rolled in, including



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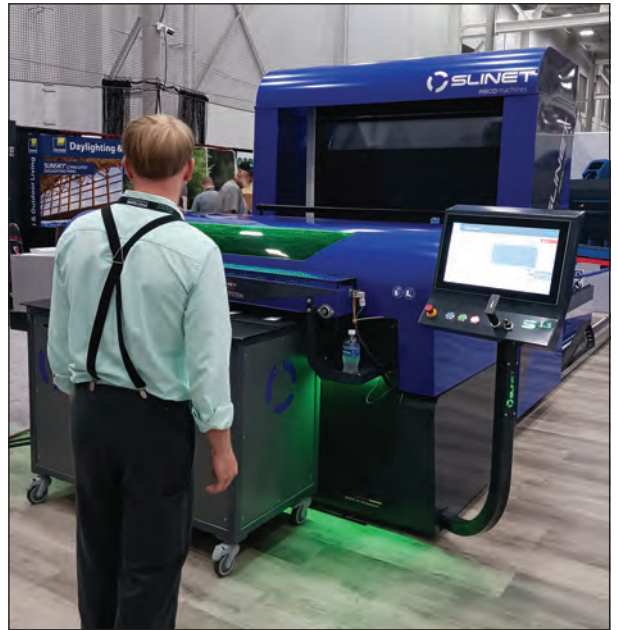


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decoilers, controls, software, electrical upgrades, shipping, training, and even limited working capital for initial coil purchases. As businesses grow, financing can adapt. Additional profiles, capacity expansions, or mid-term upgrades can sometimes be added through new schedules or restructured agreements without scrapping the original deal. Some rollformers have even doubled line capacity mid-term by refinancing or extending existing structures.

Concerns about wear, downtime, and service are often overstated. Lease and finance agreements typically focus on neglect rather than production volume. Warranty service is usually covered by the manufacturer, software updates are frequently included, and operator training is often part of the original purchase. Domestic manufacturers generally have parts and technicians readily available,

keeping downtime short. Insurance requirements are straightforward, with most businesses simply adding the equipment to existing property and liability policies.

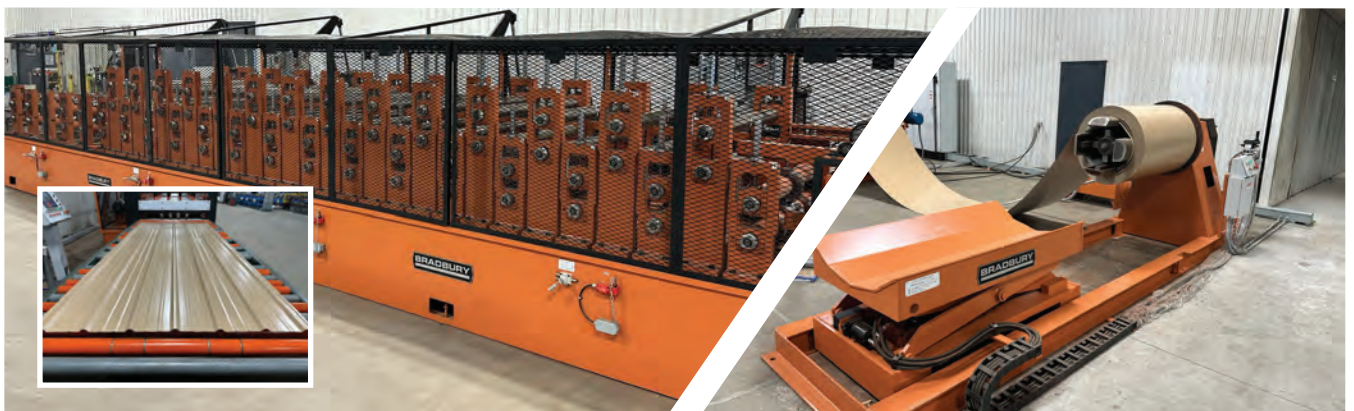
From a strategic standpoint, financing preserves capital for growth. Borrowing at a moderate rate to acquire equipment that expands throughput, opens new markets, or improves efficiency often produces a stronger return than draining cash reserves. Many rollformers combine equipment financing with modest lines of credit rather than relying on cash alone, keeping liquidity available for staff, inventory, facility improvements, marketing, and other opportunities.

IMPROVING YOUR BUSINESS SITUATION WITH FINANCING

Leasing and financing can help a business expand and become stronger

financially, but, as always, buyer beware. The biggest mistakes in leasing and financing tend to happen when buyers don't ask enough questions up front. Understanding total cost, end-of-term ownership, fees, and structural flexibility is essential. Just as rollformers research machines and companies before buying, they should apply the same diligence to financing partners. The goal is not simply to secure funding, but to establish a long-term relationship with a partner who understands the industry and can adapt as the business evolves.

For many in the roll-forming industry, equipment financing is no longer viewed as a temporary necessity but as a healthy, strategic form of debt—similar to a mortgage—used intentionally to support long-term growth without sacrificing stability. **RF**



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A view of the efficient shop layout at Metal Systems LLC, Salem, Indiana. PHOTOS COURTESY OF METAL SYSTEMS LLC

Metal Systems LLC

Built Local, Built to Last: How Indiana Shop Has Grown Into a Trusted Supplier

■ By Karen Knapstein

Like many successful roll-forming operations, Metal Systems LLC began with a practical need, a local opportunity, and a willingness to learn. According to his son Kyle, Jesse Garber founded the company in 2013 as a family-owned-and-operated company. Prior to launching the business, Jesse had several years of experience in metal roofing and general construction. During that time, the family was sourcing metal from a supplier located several hours away, and it became clear there was an opportunity—and a need—for a local roll-forming shop that could provide better service to the area immediately surrounding Salem, Indiana.

That realization came at a critical

time. Kyle explained that just before the company was founded, several tornadoes and major storms moved through the region. Reroofs and pole barns were going up everywhere, and demand for metal products surged. Recognizing both the immediate need and the long-term opportunity to support rebuilding efforts, Jesse decided to invest in equipment and bring roll forming closer to home.

The company started modestly. Early production was handled with just an ag panel roll former, a small slitter, and a 21-foot Bradbury folder. As business picked up, trim roll formers and additional time- and labor-saving machines were added incrementally, based on real demand rather than speculation. From the outset, the family

chose to invest in new equipment to ensure consistent quality and avoid downtime that could impact service.

Their entry-level equipment included a Metal Rollforming Systems (MRS) Patriot ag panel roll former, an MRS slitter, and a 21-foot Bradbury folder—all purchased new. One of the deciding factors in choosing MRS was the level of service provided early on. Dan McDonald, founder of MRS, made a personal trip to sit down with Jesse and walk through how the shop should be set up. At the time, the family considered themselves greenhorns when it came to the manufacturing side of the business. That hands-on guidance made a lasting impression. Being treated with the same respect and attention as a much larger customer was a huge step in

turning Metal Systems into a loyal MRS customer.

Today, Metal Systems produces three primary panel profiles: classic rib (ag panel), quad rib, and a 10-inch board-and-batten siding panel. Classic rib remains the leading profile, particularly for agricultural and post-frame projects. Quad rib—which Kyle refers to as the “poor man’s standing seam”—has become increasingly popular. While it is still an exposed-fastener panel, it imitates the look of standing seam from a distance. With 12-inch on-center ribs and 3-foot coverage, quad rib allows customers to use the same universal trims as ag panel. Although adoption was slow at first—the company was the first in the area to offer it—it has gained traction, especially in residential settings.

Contractors appreciate that it installs at the same speed as ag panel while offering a different look at a lower cost than true standing seam.

Board-and-batten siding has also become a strong seller for the company, particularly in newer, higher-end residential homes and barndominiums. Demand is especially strong for woodgrain finishes, which are sourced from Little Harvey’s. Woodgrain metal has proven to be a key differentiator for customers seeking a premium appearance with the durability of steel.

The company’s customer base is largely agricultural and residential, with a strong focus on post-frame buildings, residential reroofs, and small detached garages. Over the past year, Metal Systems has produced a growing amount of metal for barndominiums,

which tend to be larger projects requiring consistent quality and dependable turnaround times.

Service remains intentionally local. Most jobs are delivered within a 40-mile radius of the Metal Systems facility, and approximately 70% of orders are delivered by the company’s own drivers. The operation employs two delivery drivers and relies on several roll-off trailers from Pine Hill Trailers, which has become the company’s go-to trailer supplier due to quality construction and reliability.

Staffing has evolved naturally alongside the business. In the early days, Jesse handled office duties while his daughter ran the folder and Kyle operated the roll former. Between customers, Jesse would step into production wherever help was needed.

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As more sons finished school, they joined the business full-time. Today, the team includes Jesse, four sons, and two delivery drivers. “My sister went and got married and has a family of her own. She spent quite a few years working with us and did a good job,” Kyle said.

While there is competition in the

region—including three lumberyards within 12 miles that sell metal—the nearest roll-forming operation is roughly 40 miles away. Metal Systems maintains good relationships with competitors and operates with the belief that there is room for everyone. Differentiation comes through service and consistent quality rather than

price alone. While pricing matters, the company prioritizes loyal customers who value reliability and trust. Customers who switch suppliers over a few cents per foot are often not long-term partners, whereas those who trust the product and service tend to remain loyal.

Metal Systems sells strictly retail, with



A view of the efficient shop setup at Metal Systems LLC.



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The Marxman slitting line from SWI Machinery (above left), and the Variobend double folder stand at the ready.

no wholesale business. Approximately 90% of sales go to roofing contractors and pole barn builders, while the remaining 10% serves farmers and do-it-yourself customers.

Equipment continues to be a cornerstone of the operation. Current production at Metal Systems includes an MRS Titan Series roll former for ag panels, an MRS Patriot roll former for quad rib with an extra raft capable of running ag panels, and several MRS trim roll formers, including an MRS

board-and-batten roll former. The shop also operates a 21-foot double Variobend folder, a Marxman slitting line from SWI Machinery, a custom-designed garage door trim roll former from Acu-Form, a standalone Dyna Cut shear, and a shrink-wrap line from Ameripak. Service support from MRS has remained a standout, reinforcing the original decision to partner with the manufacturer.

Material sourcing is equally deliberate. United Steel Supply serves

as the primary coil supplier, with additional sourcing from Liberty Steel Products. Woodgrain finishes are supplied by Little Harveys. Being located in southern Indiana allows Metal Systems to source coil quickly from Jeffersonville or Terre Haute, Indiana, which helps keep inventory levels low while maintaining a wide range of available colors.

Beyond metal panels, Metal Systems also supplies windows, doors, insulation, lumber, sliding door components, nails, and screws. Levi's Building Components plays a key role in providing fasteners and smaller components, offering same-day shipping and a broad inventory that supports fast turnaround.

Looking back, one of the most important lessons learned has been the importance of shop layout and efficiency. The company began in a small pole barn on the home farm, which was added on to multiple times, and eventually relocated to a larger, purpose-built facility. The current layout has significantly improved workflow and productivity. Kyle notes

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that he has seen some shops that could reduce labor simply by improving machine placement and material flow—something they did not fully appreciate in the early years.

Kyle said business in 2025 was strong overall but unpredictable, with busy stretches followed by slower periods. Despite the variability, averages remained solid. Based on conversations with customers and contractors, expectations for 2026 are optimistic, with signs pointing toward a stronger and more stable year.

Looking ahead, Metal Systems LLC is in the process of adding an addition to its facility to increase storage capacity for lumber, insulation, and other supplies. Plans are also underway to expand the lumber lineup in 2026. While complete pole barn packages are

not currently offered, that remains a long-term goal. The company already supplies trusses through H&S Truss Company of Irvington, Kentucky, which manufactures and delivers trusses directly to job sites. Adding lumber alongside trusses and metal is a natural next step.

CONCLUSION

“To sum up our company,” Kyle explained, “my dad was looking to the future and wanted something for everyone to work together as family. He wanted everyone to have ownership. Each of us has the opportunity to buy into the company as we get older. It’s been a great business for the family that we can work together and make a living for each of our families, and we’re very thankful that God has provided a way

for us to do this. We’ve been really blessed with our business, and we like to help other people as much as we can in whatever area that may be.”

The team at Metal Systems LLC also enjoys visiting other metal shops and welcoming visitors into their own. Seeing how others approach the same work—and sharing ideas that might help someone improve—is part of what keeps the business grounded, connected, and continually moving forward. **RF**

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Accessories Keep a Shop Rolling

Considerations in Choosing Tables, Racking, and Conveyors

■ By Linda Schmid

In a roll-forming operation, productivity isn't limited solely by the forming machine. It can be constrained by how efficiently material is staged, handled, and moved before and after forming. Tables, racks, carts, and conveyors all play a role in keeping lines running, protecting finished product, and making better use of shop space—especially as shops add more colors, profiles, and quantities.

While there's no single "right" way to set up a shop, experienced rollformers tend to focus on one core goal: keeping the machines running as much as possible. Accessories that reduce handling time, simplify changeovers, and prevent bottlenecks can increase output without the expense of adding another machine.

TABLES

Tables are often the first accessory added to a roll-forming line, and roller tables are the most common. Designed to receive panels directly from the roll former, rollers allow long panels to move smoothly without dragging, preventing surface damage and minimizing manual handling.



Table on wheels. PHOTO COURTESY OF ACU-FORM EQUIPMENT



Exit or runout table. PHOTO COURTESY OF METAL ROLLFORMING SYSTEMS

RESOURCES

- Four Star Welding, 406-880-0323
- D.A. Hochstetler & Sons, www.plainmerchant.com/merchant/da-hochstetler/
- Star 1 Products, 231-825-0163
- Acu-Form Equipment, <https://www.acuformequipment.com>
- Heartland Sales & Machine, 574-223-6931
- Metal Rollforming Systems, <https://mrsrollform.com>

Table height is critical. Many shops size tables to match downstream equipment such as folders or trim roll formers. Others request adjustable-height tables, particularly when running roll formers that produce multiple profiles at different exit heights. In those cases, electric-over-hydraulic tables can allow operators to raise or lower the table with the flip of a switch, keeping production moving when switching profiles.

Length is another key factor. Common table sizes are designed for 10-, 13-, or 21-foot panels, but some operations run much longer setups, including conveyor-style tables exceeding 40 feet. When tables are placed end to end, leaving gaps for emergency access is a common safety practice. Up to two-foot gaps can usually accommodate the panels without causing warping or oil canning.

Wheeled tables remain popular, especially in smaller shops or where layouts change frequently. However, carts or rack-based systems with multiple shelves are another useful option, sometimes offering more storage capacity while still allowing finished material to be moved easily.

POWER TABLES AND CONVEYORS

As production volume increases, power tables and conveyors become more attractive. Conveyor tables can move panels from the roll former to bundling, wrapping, or secondary operations with minimal manual intervention.

Most systems rely on powered rollers, often covered with



Conveyor tables. PHOTO COURTESY OF ACU-FORM EQUIPMENT

protective materials to prevent scratching. However, sometimes rubberized rollers cause friction, so some prefer painted rollers. Gravity-only conveyors are less common for finished panels, as pushing long, heavy material by hand can be difficult and inconsistent. If the panels are going through a wrapping machine, powered rollers work better than manual movement.

Long conveyor runs—sometimes 80 feet or more—allow shops to run full orders before stopping the machine. Panels can be collected, bundled mechanically, and staged for wrapping or pickup, reducing stop-and-start inefficiencies.

Any rotating components on conveyors should include proper guarding, and safety markings, such as painted edges or safety tape, are commonly used to define pedestrian zones around moving equipment.

COIL RACKS

Coil storage is more standardized than panel storage, but it still requires careful planning. Many coil racks are around 12 feet tall and 24 feet long and may hold approximately 20 coils. Shelves can be V-shaped or fitted with angled steel to prevent coils from rolling. Others leave racks without fitted holders, making it easy to store various size coils on one rack.



Cantilever racking. PHOTO COURTESY OF DA HOCHSTETLER & SONS



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Heavy-duty coil racks may be rated at 50 tons or more, with individual shelves designed to support up to 30,000 pounds. Best practice is to store full coils on the bottom levels and partial coils higher up. Many shops also use coil pallets or coil carts when switching colors, allowing one coil to be staged while another is being loaded onto the decoiler.

Knowing the maximum outside diameter and weight of coils before ordering racking is critical. Even small differences can determine whether coils fit safely on a shelf. Some shops use custom-built racking to fit their materials. Others prefer systems designed around common coil dimensions. Whichever you choose, make sure the racking works for your needs.

Because coil racks are usually serviced by forklifts, aisle width, visibility, and forklift paths must be considered early in the layout process. Blocking forklift traffic or creating blind corners can quickly become a safety and efficiency issue.

PANEL AND TRIM RACKS

Once panels come off the roll former, storage needs change. Cantilever racking is a common solution for long panels, offering open access and high capacity. Double-sided cantilever racks allow shops to store twice the material in the same footprint, often providing better return on floor space.

Panel length drives rack design. Many shops store 8-, 10-, 12-, 14-, and 16-foot panels, sometimes with different profiles on each side of a double-sided rack. For example, one side might hold ag panels while the other stores board-and-batten profiles. Smaller profiles and shorter lengths are often staged on carts and moved closer to secondary operations.

Vertical cantilever racks are gaining traction in space-constrained shops. By storing material vertically, rollformers



Coil racking. PHOTO COURTESY OF FOUR STAR WELDING

can significantly reduce the footprint required for finished panels, keeping floor space open for production.

Trim presents its own challenges. Flat stock may be palletized and stored in pallet racking or drawer-style systems, often organized by color. Some shops store trim flats on 20-foot pallets, four feet wide, stacked tightly to conserve space, and accessed with forklifts. Others use tray-style racks made for crane handling.



Power Lift & Roll Table for dual deck roll former. PHOTO COURTESY OF HEARTLAND SALES AND MACHINE, LLC

For panels longer than 20 feet, forklift mast height and panel deflection become concerns. Spreaders or expanding forklift attachments are commonly used to prevent bowing or damage during handling.

CARTS AND MODULAR RACKING

Mobile carts have become a versatile

alternative to fixed tables and racks. Adjustable-arm carts can be configured to carry panels, trim, or mixed profiles, and their ability to move through the shop makes them especially useful in evolving layouts.

Some carts feature adjustable arms that can be repositioned vertically in seconds using simple pins rather than bolts. This makes it practical to change arm height as bundle sizes or profiles change—something operators are more likely to do when adjustments don't interrupt production.

Capacity varies by design, but some carts can carry up to 4,000 pounds while remaining movable by two people, particularly when used for lighter trim, gutters, or shorter panels. Multi-shelf configurations—often six to eight shelves—allow carts to replace tables entirely, holding several times more material in the same footprint.

Modular racking systems also allow shops to adapt pallet racking into cantilever-style storage, combining pallet storage for fasteners or accessories with panel storage in a single structure. Roof and side panels can even be added to some rack systems, creating sheltered storage without the cost of another building.

LAYOUT, SAFETY, AND MAINTENANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Regardless of the accessories used, layout matters. Some shops intentionally design flow so raw material enters at one end of the building and finished product exits near the pickup area. Keeping coils near the roll former, flat stock near trim lines, and clear forklift paths throughout the shop helps avoid congestion.

Safety considerations are straightforward but critical. Racks should never be loaded beyond their rated capacity, and weight limits should be clearly marked. Uprights and arms must be assembled exactly as specified, with all bolts installed and tightened. Floor-mounted racks should be anchor-bolted to prevent tipping if struck by a forklift—especially in shops with new or inexperienced operators.



Mobile cart. PHOTO COURTESY OF DA HOCHSTETLER & SONS

Maintenance requirements are generally low. Racking systems should be inspected periodically for damage, loose anchors, or signs of overloading such as twisted arms. Powder-coated finishes are

often used for outdoor storage, and well-maintained racks can remain in service for decades. Power tables typically require routine greasing and occasional gearbox checks, while rollers benefit from keeping debris under control to protect finished surfaces.

DESIGNING FOR FLEXIBILITY

No universal layout works for every roll-forming shop. Product mix, order size, space, building constraints, and staffing all influence accessory choices. What experienced roll formers agree on is the value of intentional design. Accessories that support flow, reduce handling, and adapt as operations change can extend the capacity of an existing roll former far more effectively than most expect.

In some cases, improving how material moves through the shop is the fastest path to higher output. **RF**



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The photos illustrating this article are all courtesy of Acu-Form Equipment. They show before & after photos of rebuilt equipment.

Rebuilt Equipment

What Rollformers Need To Know Before Making a Decision

■ By Karen Knapstein

As equipment prices rise and lead times stretch, more construction rollformers are taking a closer look at refurbished machines. For some shops, refurbishment is a smart way to extend the life of trusted equipment or add capacity quickly. For others, it can be a risky shortcut if expectations aren't aligned with reality. The key is understanding what "refurbished" truly means—and what it doesn't.

At Acu-Form Equipment, refurbishment is not a cosmetic exercise. The company manufactures a full range of roll forming machinery, including panel lines, trim roll formers, cutting and shearing equipment, and supporting production equipment such as uncoilers, perforators, and upenders. When one of those machines comes back into the shop for refurbishment, the work can range

from light reconditioning to a near-total rebuild. As Wayne Troyer of Acu-Form explains, refurbishment means "whatever is needed." While the machine frame typically remains intact, nearly every other component—shafts, dies, sprockets, drives, and controls—is subject to inspection, repair, or replacement.

That reality was illustrated powerfully in Rollforming's October/November 2023 "Out of the Ashes" feature, which chronicled roll-forming machines rebuilt after catastrophic fire damage. In several cases, machines many would have written off entirely were disassembled, inspected, retooled, and returned to productive service. Troyer notes that Acu-Form has handled similar situations, including machines that arrived severely compromised and left fully retooled for new profiles or upgraded production

needs. Whether damage comes from fire, long-term wear, or changing market demands, the principle remains the same: with the right inspection, tooling, and mechanical work, a machine's usefulness can often be extended far beyond what its initial condition suggests.

That scope of work matters, especially when it comes to tolerances and repeatability. A fully refurbished machine with new tooling and properly aligned components can perform comparably to a new machine. Problems tend to arise when refurbishment is partial and worn components—particularly dies—are left in place. Even minor wear can introduce tolerance issues that affect panel quality. Troyer emphasizes that customers looking to spend the least amount of money may get a functioning machine, but not necessarily the consistency required for



selling panels or trim to demanding contractors.

To manage that risk, Acu-Form places a strong emphasis on inspection and performance testing before a refurbished machine leaves the facility. Every

machine is checked thoroughly, and customers are involved in the decision-making process from the start. In many cases, Acu-Form identifies additional components that could be replaced to bring the machine closer to its original

performance. At that point, the decision becomes the customer's: invest more to reach 80-90% of original capability, or accept "good enough." That choice often depends on how the machine will be used. A rollformer producing panels for



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their own buildings may tolerate minor imperfections, while a supplier selling to contractors cannot.

Refurbishment also creates opportunities to modernize equipment beyond simple repair. Electrical systems, drives, and controls can be updated even if they are not technically worn out. Acu-Form

routinely converts mechanical machines to hydraulic or electric operation, or adapts machines to meet new production demands. As building styles evolve, panel overlaps change, trim dimensions shift, and profiles that once worked may no longer satisfy customer expectations. In those cases, retooling or minor

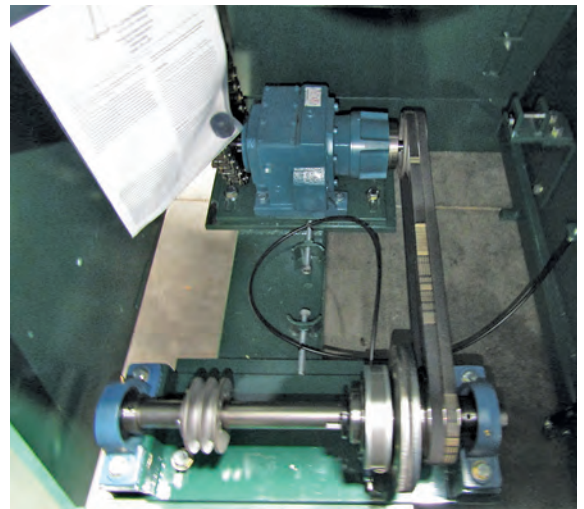
setup changes can help an older machine remain competitive.

Automation is another area where refurbishment can significantly change how a machine fits into a shop's workflow. Acu-Form has converted older mechanical machines into fully automated systems with modern cut-to-



length and servo controls, while also simplifying automated machines when customers prefer mechanical operation. In some cases, machines that no longer meet the standards of large manufacturers find a second life in smaller operations where simplicity and reliability matter more than precision automation. Troyer notes that creative adaptations—such as modifying motors, drives, or power transmission—are sometimes used to keep machines productive.

One of the ongoing challenges in refurbishment is dealing with obsolete components. Bearings, gearboxes, electrical drives, and controls that were once common may no longer be available. When that happens, Acu-Form either manufactures replacement parts



in-house or sources the closest modern equivalent. These substitutions may require additional changes, such as larger electrical enclosures or modified mounting patterns. While rarely a perfect swap,

experience and problem-solving usually make it possible to find a workable solution.

Tooling condition plays a central role in refurbishment decisions. Acu-Form

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Closer Look))

evaluates tooling wear by running parts and checking alignment. With thru-hardened D2 tool steel dies, significant wear is uncommon, but chrome-plated dies quickly reveal wear once plating begins to break down. At that point, customers must decide whether re-chroming makes financial sense or if

new dies provide better long-term value. It becomes a matter of weighing upfront cost against expected wear life and production demands.

Many refurbished machines ultimately return to the same customer. Troyer estimates that roughly 90% of refurbished machines go back into the hands of

their original owners. Some are retooled for new profiles, others are updated to accommodate changing overlaps, and many are upgraded incrementally over time—from mechanical to electric, from manual to automated—allowing shops to grow without replacing an entire machine.

Acu-Form primarily refurbishes its own equipment, a focus that allows the company to support machines long after their initial sale. That long-term service commitment ensures customers aren't pushed to the back of the line behind unfamiliar equipment and reinforces the idea that refurbishment is part of a machine's full lifecycle, not an afterthought.



Cost is often the deciding factor when weighing refurbished versus new equipment. A refurbished machine can be a good value if it aligns with the application and the buyer understands the risks. There is no warranty, and even inspected components can fail unexpectedly. A refurbished machine might run another 20 years—or it might require additional investment sooner than planned. New machines offer known performance, customized profiles, and warranty pro-

tection, but typically come with higher upfront costs and longer lead times.

So when does refurbishment make sense? Refurbishing your own machine—one you know well, with a proven profile—can be a smart move. For startups building a brand from the ground up, refurbished equipment may not be the

best foundation. First impressions matter, and inconsistent product quality can make it difficult to win repeat business. As the saying goes, you only have one chance to make a good first impression.

Lead time is another consideration. A simple reset and retune can sometimes be completed in a day. Drive conver-

sions may take a few weeks. Full rebuilds involving shafts, dies, and tooling can extend to six months. Compared to waiting a year or more for new equipment, refurbishment can sometimes put a machine back into production far sooner—keeping revenue moving instead of sitting on the table.

Before choosing refurbished or new, Troyer suggests rollformers ask themselves a few key questions: Will the refurbished machine deliver the quality I need? What kind of wear life can I realistically expect? And how does my timeline affect my bottom line? With equipment prices rising sharply over the past decade, the answers aren't always simple—but with the right expectations and the right partner, refurbishment can be a practical, flexible option in today's rollforming landscape. **RF**



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How Roper Whitney's Trade-In Program and Machine Rebuild Process Work

For metal fabrication shops, keeping equipment up to date is crucial to staying competitive and efficient. Sheet metal folding machines and other fabrication tools are vital to everyday operations, but technology doesn't stand still. Recognizing this challenge, Roper Whitney offers a comprehensive Trade-In Program designed to help businesses upgrade their equipment and a thoughtful remanufacturing process that gives older machines a new life while maintaining quality and reliability.

At its core, the Roper Whitney Trade-In Program provides shops with a straightforward way to sell aging machines and apply the value toward newer, more advanced models. The goal is to streamline the transition to modern equipment that incorporates the latest design improvements, control systems, and performance enhancements — all while reducing financial burden.

THE VALUE OF TRADING IN

Participating in the trade-in program brings several tangible benefits:

- Saves time and effort — Instead of handling the sale of a used machine independently, Roper Whitney's sales team manages the process.
- Earns credit toward new equipment — Trade-in credit can be applied to the purchase price of a new machine, reducing the amount of financing required.
- Potential tax advantages — Many shops find financial benefits through trade-related tax considerations.

Access to new features and technology — Newer machines may offer new steel frame designs, advanced clamping systems, automatic material sensing, and enhanced software controls such as the Synergy® system with features like Konstruct® and Konnect.

The program is open to customers globally, with the company tailoring solutions to help each business maximize return on its used assets. To get the process started, shops simply provide information about the machines they wish to sell — including model and serial number — and discuss their objectives with the Roper Whitney team.

THE REBUILD PROCESS

In many cases, trading in older equipment doesn't mean scrapping it. Instead, Roper Whitney remanufactures machines to meet a new standard of performance and reliability. This rebuild process is thorough and designed to ensure that remanufactured machines perform nearly like new — often at a fraction of the cost.

Here's how the remanufacturing process unfolds:



Parts are completely disassembled and restored to new condition during the Roper Whitney remanufacturing process. PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROPER WHITNEY.

1. Complete Disassembly and Inspection

The first step involves stripping the machine down to its base. Roper Whitney technicians disassemble every major component to evaluate the machine's condition. This careful inspection helps identify worn parts, outdated assemblies, and areas needing repair or replacement.

2. Cleaning and Surface Renewal

Once disassembled, all major castings and structural parts are thoroughly cleaned and prepared for refinishing. After cleaning, components are primed and repainted to protect against corrosion and wear — extending the machine's usable life and improving its appearance for resale or reuse.

3. Replacement of Key Components

A remanufactured machine undergoes significant mechanical work. All bearings are replaced to ensure smooth, reliable operation. Additionally, mechanical, electrical, and pneumatic assemblies are either repaired or replaced based on their condition and performance requirements. This ensures the remanufactured machine meets modern standards of quality and durability.

4. Thorough Testing Before Return

Before a remanufactured machine leaves the facility, it undergoes rigorous testing by their team. Each

function is checked to confirm it operates correctly under load and meets performance expectations. This testing process is a key part of ensuring reliability once the machine returns to a shop floor.

5. Warranty for Peace of Mind

To give customers confidence in remanufactured equipment, the company includes a 90-day warranty with every remanufactured machine. This warranty provides assurance that the rebuild process has restored the machine to dependable working condition.

WHY IT MATTERS FOR FABRICATION SHOPS

The combination of the Trade-In Program and remanufacturing capabilities allows shops to modernize their equipment strategically. Rather than letting older folding machines sit idle or struggle under inefficient performance, businesses can derive value from their existing assets while upgrading to modern technology that enhances productivity and reduces operational downtime.

Remanufactured machines also offer a cost-effective alternative for shops that may not be ready to invest in brand-new equipment but still want reliable performance and extended service life. By rebuilding machines with replaced bearings, refinished surfaces, and updated mechanical and electrical assemblies, Roper Whitney ensures that remanufactured tools contribute positively to a shop's workflow.

Additionally, trading in a machine and receiving credit toward a new purchase can help shops stay competitive. Newer machines often include advanced controls, better ergonomics, and improved precision — features that can make a noticeable difference in production speed, quality, and consistency.

A PRACTICAL STEP TOWARD GROWTH

For many businesses, participating in the company's Trade-In Program is more than just a transaction — it's a step toward strategic growth and long-term investment. By leveraging trade-in credit, shops can access equipment that supports evolving needs, reduces manual work, and introduces automation where appropriate.

Coupled with the remanufacturing program, Roper Whitney provides fabricators with options at various stages of equipment lifecycle and financial planning. Whether a shop wants to fully upgrade with new technology or invest in high-quality remanufactured machinery, the company's programs offer flexibility and real-world value. **RF**

Hydraulics 101

A Guide to Pressurized Fluid Systems

■ By Gary Bohringer, Mac-Tech

Hydraulics are essential aspects of engineering that involve the mechanical properties and use of liquids. This “hydraulics 101” guide to pressurized fluid systems will provide a refresher on the concepts, principles, and applications of hydraulic systems in a practical manner.

WHAT ARE HYDRAULIC SYSTEMS?

Hydraulic systems, also known as pressurized fluid systems, use fluids (typically oils) under pressure to generate, control, or transmit power. They can be as simple as a car jack or as complex as the system that powers an excavator’s bucket scooper. Hydraulics can also power an aircraft’s wing flaps and landing gear.

HOW DO HYDRAULIC SYSTEMS WORK?

A typical hydraulic system consists of several key components: a reservoir, a pump, valves, hydraulic fluid, and actuators. Each part plays a pivotal role in the operation of the system.

The reservoir acts as a storage tank for the hydraulic fluid, which is the lifeblood of the system. Hydraulic fluid transmits power, lubricates the system, and dissipates heat.

Next in line is the pump, which creates a pressure difference in the system by pushing the hydraulic fluid from the reservoir into the system. Various types of pumps include gear pumps, piston pumps, and vane pumps. The different pumps are suited for a specific application.

Valves control the direction, pressure, and flow rate of the hydraulic fluid. They allow the system to achieve the desired motion or force at the actuators. Valves can be manually, electrically, or hydraulically operated.

Finally, actuators convert the hydraulic energy into mechanical energy to do work. Hydraulic actuators can be linear (like cylinders) or rotary (like hydraulic motors). The hydraulic fluid’s pressure acts on the actuator’s surface, creating a force that moves the actuator and the machine component it is connected to.

A hydraulic system’s mechanical function involves the



Ermaksan Power-Bend Falcon Bending Machine.
PHOTOS COURTESY OF MAC-TECH

continuous movement of hydraulic fluid in a closed loop from the reservoir, through the pump and valves, to the actuators, and back to the reservoir. This fluid movement under pressure results in power transmission.

WHY HYDRAULIC SYSTEMS WORK: PASCAL'S LAW

The effectiveness of hydraulic systems relies on Pascal’s Law, a principle in fluid mechanics stating that pressure change in a confined fluid transmits equally in all directions. This law is named after Blaise Pascal, a French physicist who formulated it in the 17th century.

In the context of a hydraulic system, a force applied to one point of the hydraulic fluid will be evenly distributed throughout the entire system. For example, if a piston pushes on the fluid in one section of the system, a corresponding force will be exerted on whatever is on the other side of the system, such as another piston. This principle allows the hydraulic system to amplify force and enable the movement of heavy loads with relatively small input forces. In essence, Pascal’s Law is the reason for the

Equipment Basics))

power and effectiveness of hydraulic systems.

COMMON APPLICATIONS OF HYDRAULIC SYSTEMS

Hydraulic systems are pervasive in our everyday lives, and their practical applications extend across various industries. Consider these examples of hydraulic powered systems:

CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT

Hydraulic systems are the powerhouse behind many pieces of heavy construction equipment, from excavators and backhoe loaders to bulldozers and cranes. For instance, the hydraulic cylinder in an excavator powers the arm movements to dig and lift heavy loads, while hydraulic motors rotate the cab. These systems provide the necessary force the machines require to operate.

AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS

Aircraft heavily rely on hydraulic systems for several essential functions. These include operating the wing flaps, retracting and extending the landing gear, and even braking the wheels. Because hydraulic systems can generate a substantial amount of power relative to their size and weight, they are practical for aerospace applications.

AUTO REPAIR SHOPS

Auto repair shops commonly use hydraulic car lifts to elevate vehicles for maintenance or repair. By applying a relatively small force on one end, a much larger force generates on the other side due to the principles of hydraulics. Then, mechanics can easily raise heavy vehicles to work on them.

METAL FABRICATION MACHINERY

Hydraulic press brakes are common in the metal fabrication industry. These machines require a high level of force to bend metal sheets, which is made possible by hydraulic systems.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SPECIALIZED HYDRAULIC SYSTEM TRAINING

Considering the complexity of hydraulic systems, specialized training for operations and maintenance is indispensable. Unlike other forms of mechanical or vehicle repair training, hydraulic system maintenance demands a specific skill set and knowledge base.

While other types of repair training might focus on the basics of machinery anatomy and common mechanical issues, hydraulic system training delves into the principles of fluid dynamics, pressure regulation, and the interplay of system components. It covers details such as the role of each element (like pumps, valves, and actuators), how they interact, and the



Ermaksan Speed-Bend Pro synchronized hydraulic press brake.
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potential points of failure within the system.

Additionally, trainees learn how to handle hydraulic fluids safely and responsibly, given the crucial role these substances play in system operations and their potential hazards if mishandled. Trainees also learn the necessary preventive maintenance measures for keeping a hydraulic system running smoothly. These may involve regularly checking for leaks, monitoring fluid levels, and ensuring all components function as they should.

Training for maintaining hydraulic systems is distinct from other types of mechanical or vehicle repair training. It equips professionals with the practical skills they need to maintain and troubleshoot these complex systems, ensuring their safe and efficient operation in various applications. Bulldozer, excavator, and crane operators, as well as auto shop managers and aircraft mechanics, must develop this skillset to perform their jobs safely and ensure machinery with hydraulic components functions safely.

Hydraulics play an essential role in simple tasks, like operating a car jack, and complex operations, like operating a crane or excavator. By harnessing the power of pressurized fluids, hydraulic systems provide a reliable and highly efficient means of generating force and controlling motion. With this guide to pressurized fluid systems, we hope you have a better understanding of how these systems work and their many practical applications in our world today. **RF**

SGH AND STEEL DYNAMICS MAKE OFFER TO ACQUIRE BLUESCOPE STEEL LTD

SGH Ltd has confirmed it has submitted a Non-Binding Indicative Offer (NBIO), together with Steel Dynamics, Inc. (SDI), for SGH to acquire 100% of BlueScope Steel Ltd by way of a scheme of arrangement (the Proposal).

If the Proposal is implemented and following the transaction close, SGH would on-sell BSL's North American operations to SDI, which include BSL's North Star Flat Rolled Steel Mill and Building and Coated Products North America businesses. SGH would retain the remaining BSL "Australia + Rest of World" operations, including Australian Steel Products, Asia Coated Products, and New Zealand and Pacific Islands businesses.

The Proposal is subject to customary conditions, including completion of satisfactory due diligence, agreement of a binding scheme implementation deed, and receipt of relevant shareholder and regulatory approvals. SGH and SDI note there is no certainty that the Proposal will result in a transaction.

SAMCO MACHINERY APPOINTS NEW VP OF ENGINEERING

Samco Machinery, a provider of roll forming equipment and engineering solutions, has announced the appointment of Hever Arévalo as its new Vice President of Engineering.

This strategic leadership strengthens Samco's long-term commitment to innovation, engineering excellence, and scalable growth across the roll forming machinery industry.

Arévalo is an accomplished engineering leader and culture builder with decades of experience advancing people, processes, and manufacturing innovation within the global automotive sector. He has held senior engineering and operational leadership roles at Markdom Plastic Product (MII), STT Magna International, STT/SHW Automotive GmbH, and the ABC Group of Companies.

"With deep expertise in high-volume production, automation, and advanced product engineering design and development, Hever's background aligns directly with Samco's engineering roadmap and future growth strategy," said Bob Repovs, President and CEO, Samco Machinery. "We are thrilled to welcome Hever to the Samco family and look forward to the impact his leadership will bring as we continue delivering high-value, high-performance roll forming solutions to customers worldwide."



Hever Arévalo, Vice President of Engineering, SAMCO Machinery.



Combilift Co-Founder Martin McVicar presents a check for €100,000 to Owen Buckley of UNICEF and Michaela Plunkett, Business Development Manager. PHOTOS COURTESY OF COMBILIFT.

COMBILIFT'S 100,000TH FORKLIFT RAISES €100,000 FOR GLOBAL CHILDREN'S CHARITY

Global materials handling provider Combilift has celebrated a major manufacturing milestone by transforming its 100,000th forklift into a powerful force for good, raising and

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Winner Kareen Farrell travelled to Combilift's headquarters in Monaghan to receive the one-of-a-kind 100,000th Combi-CBE "Golden Forklift."

donating €100,000 (US \$117,745) to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund to support children in crisis worldwide.

To mark the production of its 100,000th forklift, Combilift launched its largest-ever worldwide competition, offering the exclusive 100,000th "Golden Prize" multidirectional Combi-CBE. All proceeds raised were donated to UNICEF Ireland's Children's Emergency Fund.

The campaign generated €56,500 (US \$66,526) in ticket sales, and at a check presentation ceremony, Combilift announced it had topped up the total contribution to an impressive €100,000, underlining the company's long-standing commitment to corporate social responsibility.

Speaking at the handover, Combilift CEO and Co-Founder Martin McVicar said: "This campaign was designed not only to celebrate a major manufacturing achievement for Combilift, but also to make a meaningful difference beyond the factory floor. By supporting UNICEF, we are supporting one of the world's most effective humanitarian organisations and helping children who need it most."

The check was formally presented by Martin McVicar to Owen Buckley, UNICEF Ireland's Head of Corporate Partnerships, and Michaela Plunkett, Business Development Manager, in Monaghan.

Owen Buckley welcomed the donation, saying: "As we enter the winter season, our priority is ensuring children affected by war and natural disasters have access to warm clothing, safe shelter and

continued education. This generous contribution from Combilift will help UNICEF respond quickly to urgent needs."

The winning ticket was purchased by Kareen Farrell, who travelled to Combilift's headquarters in Monaghan to receive the one-of-a-kind 100,000th Combi-CBE "Golden Forklift."

Reacting to her win, Kareen Farrell said: "I was absolutely delighted when I heard I had won, as I'm never lucky. My dad shared the competition details and bought a ticket to support UNICEF because it's a children's charity that helps children all over the world, so winning the forklift was an incredible bonus."

The Golden Forklift was first unveiled at the IMHX Exhibition in the UK before embarking on a European trade show tour, attracting strong international interest and reflecting Combilift's global customer base and shared commitment to positive social impact.



Roof Hugger is an LSI Group brand.

WORTHINGTON ENTERPRISES TO ACQUIRE LSI GROUP

Worthington Enterprises Inc., a designer and manufacturer of brands that improve everyday life by elevating spaces and experiences, has announced it has signed a definitive agreement to acquire LSI Group, LLC (LSI) of Logansport, Indiana. LSI, which includes the brands BPD, Logan Stampings, LSI Metal Fabrication and Roof Hugger®, is one of the largest U.S. manufacturers of standing seam metal roof clips and retrofit components in the commercial metal roof market.

Worthington Enterprises plans to purchase LSI Group for approximately \$205 million with cash on hand and borrowings under the company's revolving credit facility. The transaction is expected to close in January 2026,

subject to regulatory approval and other customary closing conditions.

Demand for resilient, energy-efficient and durable roofing systems is expected to continue growing as building owners prioritize stronger, code-compliant structures in response to evolving weather patterns and manage rising energy costs and aging commercial building infrastructure, especially as roofs built during the construction boom of the early 2000s are now reaching the end of their service life. Common applications are industrial and manufacturing facilities, retail buildings, academic and municipal structures, hospitality, data centers, and recreation and mixed-use spaces. Standing seam metal roof clips, which act as concealed anchors, secure each metal roof panel to the underlying roof substrate. (A new 10,000-square-foot roof requires approximately 8,000-10,000 metal roof clips.)

LSI serves the retrofit market with the Roof Hugger brand of metal sub-purlins used to attach a new roof on top of an existing roof. Compared to full replacements, retrofitting with a metal roof lowers installation costs, improves energy efficiency, enhances code compliance, minimizes disruption during installation and increases sustainability.

LSI has two manufacturing locations in Logansport where it was founded in 1968 as Logan Stampings. Robert Baker, owner and president, LSI Group, LLC, purchased Logan Stampings in 2004 and grew the business through innovation, acquisition and prioritizing relationships. He will continue as a leader of the LSI business as part of Worthington Enterprises.

E-IMPACT MARKETING NAMED A GOOGLE PREMIER PARTNER

E-Impact Marketing, a full-service digital marketing company based in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, has been named a Google Premier Partner for 2025, placing the agency among the top 3% of

Google Partners in the United States.

Google's Premier Partner tier represents the highest level of the Google Partners program and is awarded annually to agencies that demonstrate strong account performance, sustained client growth, and advanced Google Ads expertise. Eligibility is evaluated relative to other agencies operating within the same country.

E-Impact Marketing met Premier Partner requirements through consistent campaign performance and by maintaining active Google Ads certifications across Search, Display, Video, and Shopping advertising.

For James Charles, co-owner and COO of E-Impact Marketing, the company's recognition as a Premier Partner,

"represents all the hard work of our teams behind the scenes. It's great for that hard work to be officially recognized, and for us to reach a level that Google considers best-in-class."

As a marketing agency that serves small to medium-sized businesses in the construction and manufacturing space, E-Impact Marketing's status as a Google Premier Partner is a testament to years of hard work. As Charles points out, "this isn't a badge we can buy; it's only earned through consistent account performance and measurable client results".

As part of the recognition, E-Impact Marketing is listed in Google's official Partner Directory, which identifies verified Premier Partners for businesses seeking advanced Google Ads management capabilities.

STEEL DYNAMICS ACQUIRES NEW PROCESS STEEL

Steel Dynamics, Inc. has announced the completion of the acquisition of the remaining 55% equity interest in New Process Steel, L.P. ("New Process Steel" or "New Process"). New Process Steel is a metals solutions and distribution supply-chain management company headquartered in Houston, Texas, with a focus toward growing its value-added manufacturing applications.

New Process Steel is a prominent North

American metal products manufacturer and supply-chain solutions provider, headquartered in Houston, Texas, with two manufacturing locations in Mexico and four manufacturing locations in the U.S., two of which are located at Steel Dynamics' Butler, Indiana, and Columbus, Mississippi, divisions. New Process Steel was purchased in 1952 by Gene Fant, the father of New Process' Chief Executive Officer, Richard Fant. Richard Fant has significantly grown, modernized, and diversified New Process during his over 25-year tenure as CEO. New Process employs approximately 1,275 individuals and is currently Steel Dynamics' single largest flat roll steel customer.

Steel Dynamics has facilities located throughout the United States and in Mexico. The company operates using a circular manufacturing model, producing lower-carbon-emission, quality products with recycled scrap as the primary input. The company is one of the largest domestic steel producers and metal recyclers in North America, combined with a meaningful downstream steel fabrication platform. It is also currently investing in aluminum operations to further diversify its product offerings, with plans to supply aluminum flat rolled products with high recycled content to the countercyclical sustainable beverage can industry, in addition to the automotive and industrial sectors.

CIDAN MACHINERY GROUP APPOINTS CHANDLER BARDEN AS GROUP CEO

CIDAN Machinery Group has announced that Chandler Barden has been appointed Chief Executive Officer effective January 1, 2026. He will lead CIDAN Machinery Group globally, steering the company's worldwide operations and growth agenda.

Chandler has 14 years with CIDAN, during which he has worked closely with customers, dealers, and partners across key markets. He currently serves as CEO of CIDAN Machinery Inc. in



Chandler Barden, CIDAN Machinery Group CEO.

the United States and will succeed Petter Hjelmqvist, who will continue to support the transition and the Group in an advisory capacity. Chandler brings a strong track record in customer-driven growth and operational execution. His industry expertise across architectural and industrial fabrication makes him a natural choice to guide CIDAN forward.

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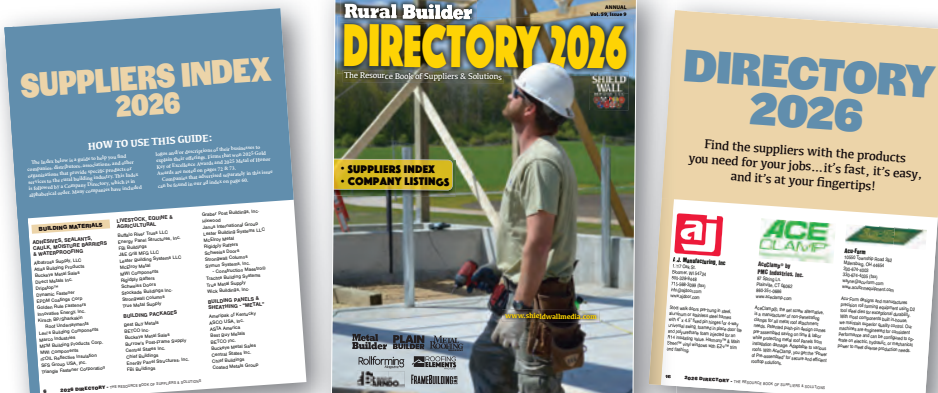


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Gatlinburg, Tennessee

Why Families Keep Coming Back To the “Gateway to the Smoky Mountains”

■ By Rollforming Magazine Staff

For families seeking a vacation destination that balances wholesome recreation, natural beauty, and time together, Gatlinburg, Tennessee, has quietly become a favorite. Nestled at the edge of the Great Smoky Mountains, Gatlinburg offers a setting where families can slow down, enjoy the outdoors, and spend meaningful time together—without needing elaborate plans or constant travel between attractions.

What sets Gatlinburg apart is not any single attraction, but the way its offerings work together. Outdoor experiences, simple amusements, family-friendly dining, and comfortable lodging are all close at hand. Families can choose full days of activity or unhurried afternoons of rest, making the area well suited for multigenerational travel.

The following reasons help explain why Gatlinburg continues to be an attractive and dependable vacation choice for

families, particularly those who value simplicity, togetherness, and experiences that can be shared across all ages.

A NATURAL SETTING THAT ENCOURAGES TOGETHERNESS

Gatlinburg’s greatest asset is its location at the entrance to Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The park provides families with easy access to nature without admission fees or complicated planning.

One example is Cades Cove, a scenic loop drive where families can see historic cabins, barns, and churches while watching for deer, wild turkeys, and other wildlife. The drive allows families to experience the park together without strenuous hiking, making it suitable for all ages.

Another popular option is easy walking trails, such as the short hike to Cataract Falls near Sugarlands Visitor

Center. These gentle paths allow children, parents, and grandparents to walk together, talk, and enjoy the outdoors at a comfortable pace. Picnicking beside mountain streams is another simple pleasure many families enjoy.

ACTIVITIES THAT APPEAL TO ALL AGES

Gatlinburg offers attractions that allow entire families to participate together, rather than separating by age group.

For example, Ripley’s Aquarium of the Smokies provides an indoor experience where children can observe marine life up close while adults enjoy well-designed exhibits and educational displays. It is both engaging and calm, making it a good option on rainy days.

Another shared activity is mini golf, which is available at several locations in town. Mini golf allows younger children, teenagers, and adults to play together without competition or pressure, creat-

ing moments of laughter and friendly conversation.

A WALKABLE, EASY-TO-NAVIGATE TOWN

One of Gatlinburg’s most practical advantages is its compact downtown. Many attractions, shops, and restaurants are located within walking distance of one another.

Families staying near downtown can walk to restaurants for breakfast, visit an attraction, and return to their lodging for rest without needing to load everyone into a vehicle multiple times a day. This simplicity reduces stress and allows families to move at a comfortable pace.

The Village Shops, designed to resemble a small European-style village, offer a pleasant walking experience with ice cream, candy shops, and small specialty stores. The layout encourages browsing without crowds or confusion, making it enjoyable for families with children.

FLEXIBLE OPTIONS FOR DIFFERENT BUDGETS

Gatlinburg works well for families who prefer modest spending and practical choices. Many activities are free or low cost, allowing families to balance paid attractions with simple enjoyment.

For example, families can spend one day exploring Great Smoky Mountains National Park at no cost, followed by another day visiting a paid attraction such as a scenic chairlift ride. This flexibility allows families to choose experiences that fit their budget.

Dining options also range widely. Families can enjoy a sit-down meal at a local restaurant one evening and prepare meals at their cabin the next. This approach keeps expenses manageable while still allowing for special outings.

COMFORTABLE LODGING FOR FAMILY LIVING

Accommodations in Gatlinburg are well suited to family groups, particularly those traveling together.

Many families choose cabins, which

offer kitchens, shared living areas, and multiple bedrooms. This setup allows families to cook meals together, visit in the evenings, and maintain familiar routines.

Others prefer family-oriented hotels that provide convenient locations and breakfast options. These accommodations reduce daily planning and allow families to focus on activities rather than logistics.



Families are always welcome at the Construction Rollforming Show - and all Shield Wall Media events.

DINING THAT FEELS FAMILIAR AND WELCOMING

Restaurants in Gatlinburg tend to be casual and family-friendly, with menus that appeal to both adults and children.

Breakfast establishments such as pancake houses are especially popular. These restaurants serve hearty meals that are familiar, filling, and well suited to large family groups.

For dinner, places offering Southern-style comfort food provide simple menus, generous portions, and welcoming atmospheres. Many families appreciate restaurants where conversation is easy and meals are unhurried.

A PACE THAT ENCOURAGES REST AND CONVERSATION

Unlike fast-paced vacation destinations, Gatlinburg allows families to slow down.

Afternoons spent sitting on a cabin porch, walking beside a mountain

stream, or enjoying a quiet drive through the park offer opportunities for conversation and reflection.

Evening activities such as board games, reading, or visiting together reinforce the sense that the vacation is about time spent together rather than constant activity.

AN ATMOSPHERE THAT FEELS WELCOMING

Gatlinburg has long been known as a place where families feel comfortable and welcome.

Many attractions and businesses are accustomed to serving multigenerational groups and understand the needs of families traveling together. The overall tone of the town remains friendly and approachable.

This welcoming environment helps families relax and focus on what matters most—spending time together.

A PLACE TO BUILD LASTING MEMORIES

Ultimately, Gatlinburg’s appeal lies in its ability to create shared memories.

Children remember seeing wildlife, walking mountain trails, and enjoying simple treats. Adults remember conversations, laughter, and the chance to step away from daily routines.

These shared experiences often lead families to return year after year, confident that Gatlinburg offers a dependable setting for rest, recreation, and togetherness.

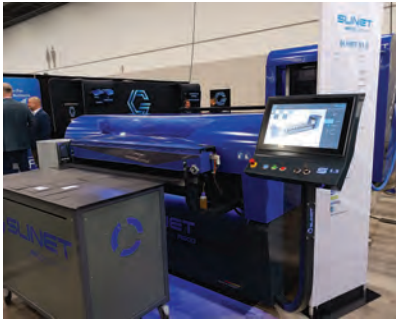
Gatlinburg is not about extravagance or constant excitement. Instead, it offers natural beauty, simple pleasures, and room for families to be together. For many families—especially those who value connection, tradition, and time well spent—that combination makes Gatlinburg a meaningful and lasting vacation destination.

So, when you’re in town September 16-17 for the Construction Rollforming Show, why not plan a day or two extra to enjoy all the amenities the “Gateway to the Smokies” has to offer? **RF**

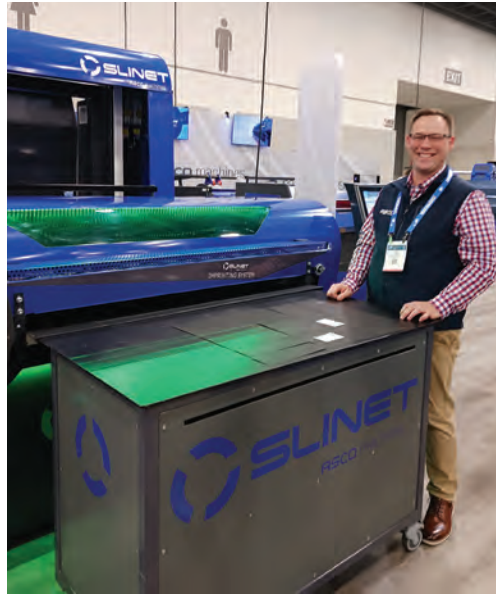
Machines at IRE 2026

Equipment on Display at the International Roofing Expo, Las Vegas

■ By Karen Knapstein



Eddy Pentz (right) demonstrates the Slinet slitter in the ASCO USA, Inc. exhibit. The Slinet S1.5 features integrated coil storage. Note the slit pieces on the table in front of Eddy ... The machine features up to 8 automatically adjustable knives, variable cutting gaps, and bottom-up cross-cutting to prevent scratches.



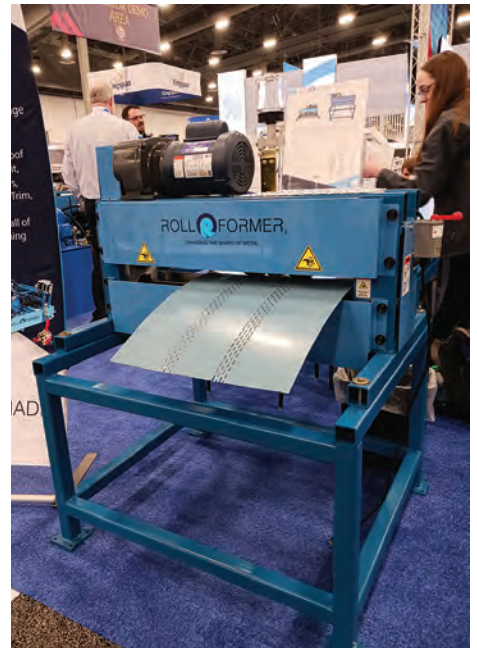
Many construction metal-forming equipment suppliers and manufacturers exhibited at the International Roofing Expo in Las Vegas from January 20-22.

Attendees could watch videos of equipment running in the exhibits that didn't set up equipment. While those exhibitors who brought equipment ran the machines throughout the course of the three-day show.

For those of you who couldn't make it to IRE this year, keep in mind that many of these companies are exhibiting at the Construction Rollforming Show (CRS) in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, September 16-17. Watch the pages of Rollforming Magazine and www.constructionrollformingshow.com for CRS-related news and updates. **RF**



The EvoBend trim folder was on display in the Tennsmith / Roll Former / Roper Whitney exhibit. Judging by the pile of trim samples, its capabilities were demonstrated often.



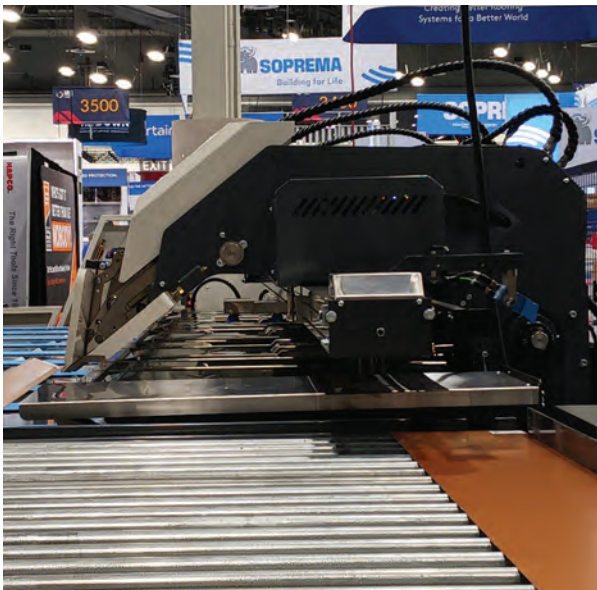
The Roll Former Perforator was also on display in the Tennsmith / Roll Former / Roper Whitney booth.



Far Left: A Schechtl folder is demonstrated in the MetalForming exhibit.



Left: The Metal Roofing Alliance distributed the "Residential Metal Roofing Buyer's Guide" and "Max Builds a Metal Roof." The Max Builds children's books have been well received by industry professionals.



SWI Machinery demonstrated its impressive 28-foot automated folder.

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Left & Inset: A prototype color scheme of the Variobend long folder from Forge (formerly Hershey's Metal Meister).

Below: A Variobend in the familiar blue finish.

The final color scheme will incorporate more grey areas in the design and equipment will have a matte finish.



Multiple New Tech Machinery portable SSQ3 roll formers were exhibited at IRE 2026.



Left: Farmington Hills, Michigan's, Van Mark made the trip to Nevada to exhibit and demonstrate its manual trim brakes and other equipment.

SAVE THE DATE:

IRE will be return to Las Vegas February 16-18, 2027, in the Las Vegas Convention Center, West Hall.





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