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Vol. 9, No. 2

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# Communication Is Key

■ By Karen Knapstein

If you run a roll forming shop, you already know that coil inventory can be a balancing act.

Keep too much on the floor and you tie up valuable cash and storage space. Keep too little, and a delayed shipment or unexpected order can bring production to a halt. Finding the right balance is never easy—and in today's market, it's even more challenging.

That's one reason it's so important to stay in close communication with your coil suppliers.

Roll forming shops often have a good sense of their typical coil needs, but

demand in construction markets can change quickly. A large building project, a seasonal rush or a sudden shift in customer demand can send material requirements in a new direction. When suppliers have a clear picture of what your shop expects to run in the weeks or months ahead, they're in a much better position to help you plan.

Good communication also helps when lead times start to stretch. Coil suppliers can often provide early insight into mill schedules, coating availability or potential delays. That kind of information allows rollformers to adjust purchasing plans

before inventory becomes a problem.

Just as important, suppliers benefit from hearing about changes on the shop floor. If you're adding a new profile, expanding into a new market or expecting a surge in orders, sharing that information helps them anticipate your needs.

There's no perfect formula for coil inventory, but strong relationships with suppliers can make the process far more manageable. For many roll forming operations, the best inventory strategy starts with a simple step: pick up the phone and have the conversation. **RF**



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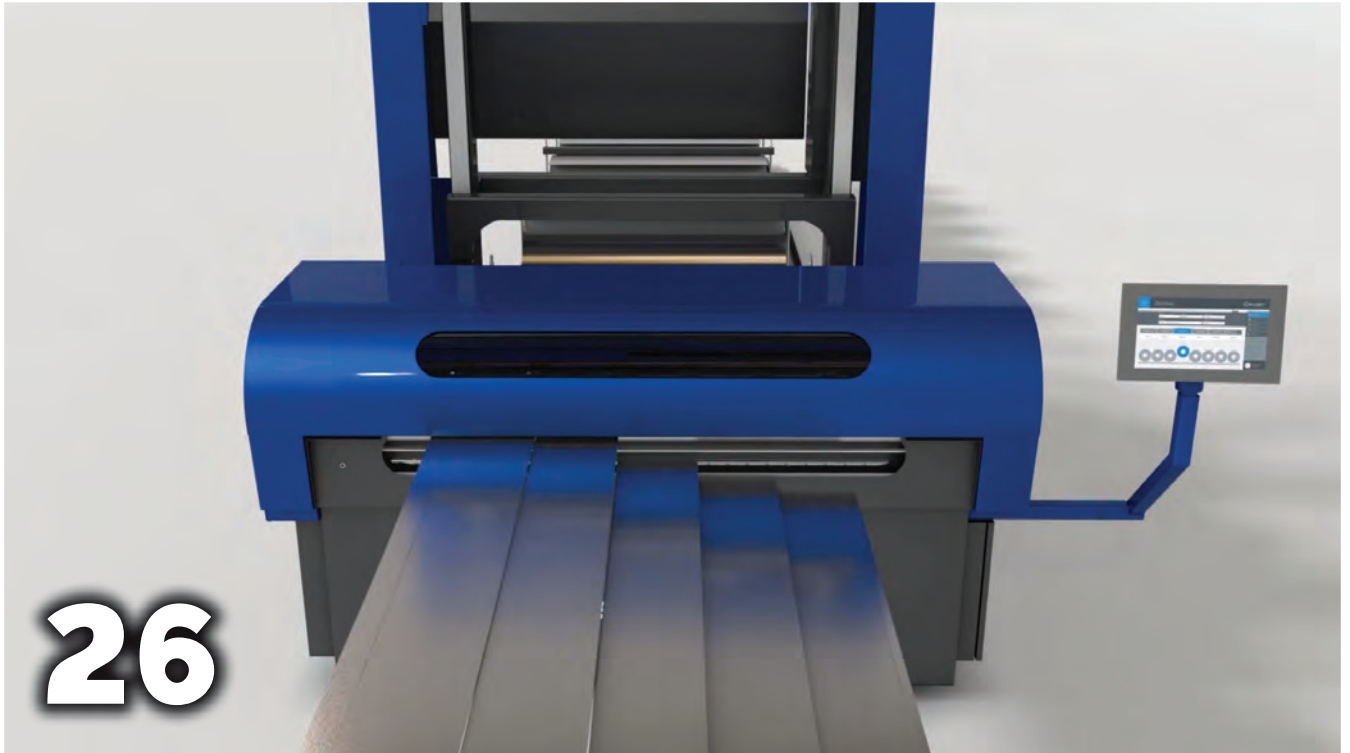
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BUILDER SHOW**  
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# Contents ))

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**6:** Steel Market Update  
Courtesy of Majestic Steel

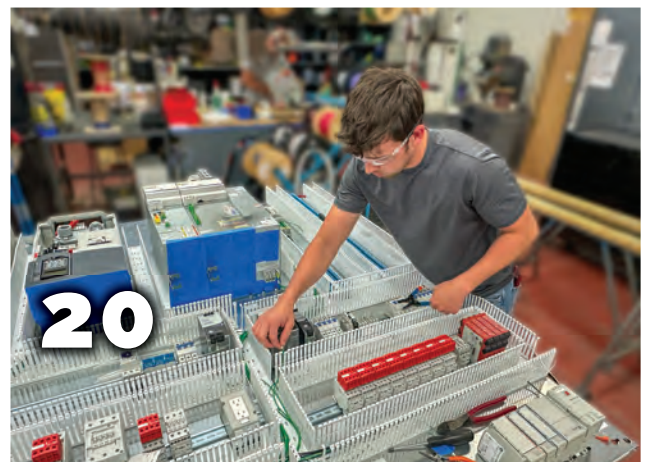
**8:** Coil Inventory  
Strategy  
Points To Consider

**14:** Business Building  
Adapting Your Business  
Marketing In a Digital Age

**20:** System Upgrades  
Benefits of Planned  
Control Upgrades

**22:** Opportunities  
Growth of the Standing  
Seam Roof Market

**26:** Slitters & Shears  
Cutting It Right Shapes  
Productivity in the Shop



## Departments ))

3 Editor's Message

29 News

32 Business Connections

36 New Products

**CORRECTION:** In the February/ March edition of Rollforming, on page 16 (Leasing/Financing Equipment), an incorrect web address was listed in the Resources box for Apex Capital Group. The firm's URL is [www.financewithapex.com](http://www.financewithapex.com). Rollforming Magazine regrets the error.



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

## INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

Company	Page #
AceClamp .....	29
Acu-Form .....	33
American Garage Door Factory .....	32
ASC Machine Tools Inc.....	3, 33
ASCO USA, Inc. ....	15,33
Aztec Washer Company.....	34
Beck Automation .....	30
Bradbury Group.....	19
Coil Spot / Wildcat / SpeedLap .....	33
Creekside Manufacturing LLC.....	32
Daystar Systems LLC.....	32
Direct Metals, Inc.....	33
Dripstop™.....	11
Dynamic Fastener .....	13
E-Impact Marketing LLC.....	16, 34
Flack Hill Machine .....	32
Four Star Welding.....	31
Golden Rule Fasteners.....	24, 33
Grandura Distribution LLC.....	32
Heartland Sales & Machine.....	34
Hixwood.....	16
Indiana Warm Floors .....	35
Levi's Building Components .....	27
Marion Manufacturing.....	34
Metal Rollforming Systems.....	12
Metalfarming LLC .....	17
Mid South Aluminum .....	7
New Tech Machinery.....	23
PA Wholesale Products.....	32
Pine Hill Trailers.....	34
Planet Saver Industries / GreenPost .....	35
Plasti-Sleeve.....	35
Postsaver Europe Ltd.....	34
Progressive Metals .....	9, 34
Red Dot Products, LLC .....	34
Rib Runner Tools.....	32
Roll Former LLC .....	30
Roper Whitney.....	28
Stan Group dba: Liberty Seamless .....	33
Star 1 Products LLC .....	25
SteelGrip SAMM, Inc.....	33
United Steel Supply.....	IFC, 32
Winding Road Roofing .....	35

### Metal Builder

Advanced Architectural Sheet Metal & Supply .....	Flip 5
Central States Manufacturing Inc.....	Flip 2
Levi's Building Components .....	Flip 7
New Tech Machinery.....	Flip 9

### On The Cover:

Demonstrating a Slinet splitter at IRE 2026. *Photo by Shield Wall Media.*

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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.

## SCRAP PRICING

The Prime Scrap report dated February 13 (the most recent report available at press time), states prime scrap climbed for the third consecutive month—to the highest level since April.

Prime scrap settled at \$445/gt, up \$30 from \$415/gt in January.

Winter storm Fern disrupted scrap collection and distribution across the U.S., limiting overall supply in the market. Export demand also continues to improve, while hot-rolled prices are holding above \$950/ton, signaling confidence in the market.

Shredded scrap pricing increased by \$30/gt as well in February, keeping shredded and prime in parity for the second consecutive month.

## SPOT IRON ORE

The Platts, Spot Iron Ore report for the week ending March 6 reports that pricing increased for the second consecutive week, climbing back over \$100.00/mt. Spot iron ore pricing ended the week at \$100.75/mt, up from \$99.00/mt the previous week.

Iron ore increased two consecutive weeks after hitting the lowest level since June 2025. Post-holiday restocking provided a boost to pricing although Chinese inventories remain robust.

## DOMESTIC STEEL PRODUCTION

According to the American Iron & Steel Institute, Weekly Domestic Steel Production report dated March 3, domestic raw steel production dipped slightly after hitting the highest output since January 2022.

U.S. mills produced an estimated 1,811k tons at a 78.3%

utilization rate, down from 1,817k tons and a 78.5% rate previously.

Despite the slight drop, production has increased seven out of the last nine weeks. Production slipped in three of the five regions, with the largest decrease (in tons) coming from the Southern region. Production in the Southern region dropped from 836k tons to 811k tons. Year-to-date production is now up 7.6% compared to the same time frame last year.

## CARBON MILL SHIPMENTS

According to the American Iron & Steel Institute Carbon Mill Shipments: January 2026, domestic mill carbon flat rolled shipments rebounded to start the new year.

January flat rolled shipments totaled 4.313 million tons, up 3.5% from December but down sharply from last January. Year-over-year shipments fell 10.4% and were at their lowest January level since 2023.

Within overall flat rolled, month-over-month shipments saw increases from cold rolled products. The 3.8% month-over-month increase in cold rolled shipments overcame slight declines in hot rolled and coated shipments.

## 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 March 6, zinc pricing dropped after climbing the previous two weeks.

Zinc pricing ended the week at \$3,237.50/mt (\$1.490/lb), down from \$3,325/mt (\$1.508/lb) previously. Global economic and manufacturing sentiment took a hit this week following the Middle East conflict. Global zinc inventory increased again, now up eight out of the last nine weeks.

LME warehouse inventory slipped from 98,400 metric tons to 95,000 metric tons. Shanghai warehouse inventory increased again however, climbing from 126,052 metric tons to 134,921 metric tons. **RF**

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

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# Inventory Strategy in a Volatile Coil Market

## Balancing Service, Risk, and Working Capital in Coil Supply

■ By Linda Schmid

For coil suppliers and roll formers alike, inventory strategy is never just about how much steel sits on the floor. It is a constant balancing act between service, risk exposure, and margin performance. The goal sounds simple: meet customer demand within required lead times. In practice, it requires disciplined forecasting, sourcing redundancy, operational flexibility, and a clear understanding of where value is created.

Across the supply chain, companies are approaching that balance differently — some emphasizing inventory turns and working capital discipline, others building their value proposition around high on-hand availability. Each model carries its own risks and advantages.

### BALANCING SERVICE, RISK, AND MARGIN

On the supplier side, inventory management often begins with a three-part objective: meet customer lead times, limit exposure to price volatility, and avoid excessive working capital tied up in slow-moving stock.

To maintain flexibility, many suppliers delay production steps until they are operationally necessary. Production deferral reduces pricing risk and allows companies to respond to shifts in demand. Coil sizing and production processes are optimized to reduce scrap and improve yield, protecting margins that can otherwise be eroded by hidden costs.

For products requiring significant stocking positions, inventory health is managed actively. That means tracking turns and velocity, conducting routine portfolio reviews, and adjusting SKUs based on movement. If a product cannot turn four times per year, some consider it an inefficient use of capital. Some view a three-month supply as the best-practice financial benchmark.

Color trends complicate that discipline. If a color falls out of favor and inventory lingers, capital becomes trapped. Backing off slow-moving colors becomes necessary, even when the instinct is to offer broader variety.

If a customer wants a color or style that is not on hand,



Coil storage. PHOTO COURTESY OF HIXWOOD.

Hixwood will custom make it for them. It will take some extra time, but it is likely that all suppliers have found it to be a low performer, and the customer is likely going to have to wait anywhere they go.

On the other hand, running too lean does carry a risk: lost sales.

### HIGH INVENTORY AS A CORE VALUE PROPOSITION

Some suppliers have built their strategy around the opposite approach — carrying significant coil inventory so customers do not have to wait.

For these companies, such as Coated Metals Group, inventory on the ground is the value. Large facilities, racking systems, trained fulfillment staff, and organized storage allow them to maintain broad SKU counts across gauges, widths, and colors. Common master coil widths such as 40, 42, and 48 inches are stocked alongside multiple gauges — often 22 through 28 gauge in primary colors, earth tones, and darker architectural shades. Prefinished 4' x 10' sheets and coil in standard 16-, 20-, and 24-inch sizes are readily available, and even uncommon sizes can be accommodated when demand justifies it.

## RESOURCES

- Coated Metals Group — [www.cmgmetals.com](http://www.cmgmetals.com)
- Englert, Inc. — [www.englertinc.com](http://www.englertinc.com)
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This approach requires capital and infrastructure. Cash flow is tied up in stock. Storage space must be sufficient. Order fulfillment accuracy becomes critical, but proponents argue that high inventory mitigates more risk than it creates.

During supply chain disruptions, including the COVID period, companies operating lean models often faced price volatility and long mill lead times. Those carrying deeper inventory were able to stabilize supply for customers. Some even expanded SKU counts when master coil widths were delayed, introducing alternative sizes to keep projects moving.

From that perspective, stability becomes a competitive differentiator. Contractors do not lose jobs because material is unavailable; they can schedule confidently, protect margins, and add to the bottom line.

### FORECASTING, CONTRACTS, AND DOMESTIC SOURCING

Inventory discipline begins upstream at the mill.

Many roll formers contract inbound steel in consistent monthly volumes, often ordering large quantities — sometimes approaching a million pounds at a time — divided across core colors. Coil weights are set strategically, for example ordering 8,000- to 8,500-pound coils within mill tolerances of plus or minus 15 percent.

Forecasting drives those allocations. Some companies encourage customers to share projections but recognize that forecasts shift. Rather than relying heavily on customer commitments, they monitor order patterns. If a color begins trending upward over several weeks, they increase orders to ensure availability.

Most coil programs revolve around a core group of painted products — perhaps 100 high-movement SKUs. These are the items expected to turn at least four times per year. If a product becomes a slow mover internally, it is often slow market-wide. In those cases, customers will likely face wait times regardless of supplier.

Domestic sourcing has become a stabilizing factor for many operations. All-domestic supply chains allow closer alignment with both micro and macroeconomic conditions and reduce disruption risk. Long-term relationships with mills, paint vendors, and customers reinforce that stability.

### COST DRIVERS BEYOND COIL PRICE

Material cost increases have reinforced the need for production deferral, working capital discipline, and diversified sourcing.

But coil cost is only one component of the inventory equation. Scrap represents a hidden expense, which is why Englert optimizes coil sizing and production processes to reduce scrap and improve yield. Freight, particularly inbound, must be managed carefully, even when outbound freight is minimal or absorbed. Warehousing contracts may require 90-day commitments or

renegotiation windows. Some companies outsource storage when it makes economic sense, particularly in regions where geography limits distribution reach.

Inventory that does not move ties up cash that could be invested elsewhere — new profiles, additional equipment, facility expansion, or geographic growth.

### JIT VS. AVAILABILITY: THE ONGOING DEBATE

Just-in-time models reduce inventory carrying costs but increase exposure to mill lead times and price swings. High-availability models increase carrying costs but protect service levels.

The right answer depends on market position.

If a roll former loses a job because a competitor has matte black on the floor and they do not, the cost of that lost sale outweighs carrying expense. During periods of heavy demand for low-gloss and matte finishes, suppliers with ready stock gained market share, while JIT manufacturers fielded calls explaining why material was unavailable.



**Coil storage.** PHOTO COURTESY OF COATED METALS GROUP.

Conversely, excessive inventory in declining colors or finishes erodes financial performance. Englert believes that material cost increases will support continued emphasis on production deferral, working capital discipline, and diversification of supply sources to provide flexibility and manage cost.

Many companies attempt to resolve the dilemma with hybrid strategies: disciplined core inventory, selective expansion into high-demand specialty finishes, and diversified sourcing to manage disruption risk.

### MARKET-DRIVEN SKU EXPANSION

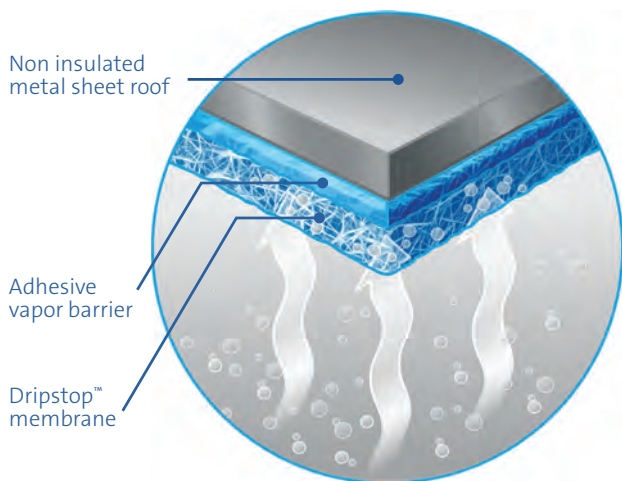
Inventory strategy is increasingly market-driven. According to Coated Metals Group geographic expansion often requires adding new master coil widths to match regional preferences. For example, a Texas market might demand 21-inch coil, prompting introduction of 42-inch master coil to support it.

Color trends are monitored through multiple channels — customer conversations, architectural and interior design influence, trade publications, paint vendor partnerships, and

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## Closer Look))

broader aesthetic shifts. The growth of matte and ultra-low-gloss finishes reflects both visual preference and functional benefits, such as reducing perceived oil canning.

Some suppliers are expanding into printed wood-grain and natural-material mimicry products. As paint technology advances, SKU counts will likely continue increasing.

### MANAGING INVENTORY HEALTH

Regardless of strategy, inventory health must be actively managed.

Key metrics include:

- Turns per year
- Velocity by SKU
- Working capital exposure
- Scrap rate and yield optimization
- Service level performance

Routine portfolio reviews help ensure that capital is allocated to products that move. Slow movers are evaluated and reduced. Core items are protected.

Companies like Hixwood ensure that loyal customers receive allocation priority during tight supply conditions. Clear communication about mill lead times and realistic delivery expectations help manage downstream planning.

### LOOKING AHEAD: DATA AND AI INTEGRATION

Data management and AI-driven forecasting are expected to play a larger role in coil inventory strategy in the years ahead. Enhanced demand pattern recognition, improved SKU rationalization, and predictive ordering models could reduce both stockouts and excess inventory.

At the same time, geography, paint technology innovation, and customer responsiveness will continue to shape inventory models.

In the metal industry, reliable partnerships remain central. Contractors should not have to worry whether their supplier has material available. The ability to schedule confidently, avoid delays, and secure material when competitors cannot may ultimately matter more than incremental carrying costs.

Material cost increases will support continued emphasis on production deferral, working capital discipline, and diversification of supply sources to provide flexibility and manage cost.

Inventory strategy, then, is not simply about how much steel is on the floor. It is about aligning service reliability, financial discipline, and market responsiveness — and knowing where your competitive advantage truly lies. **RF**



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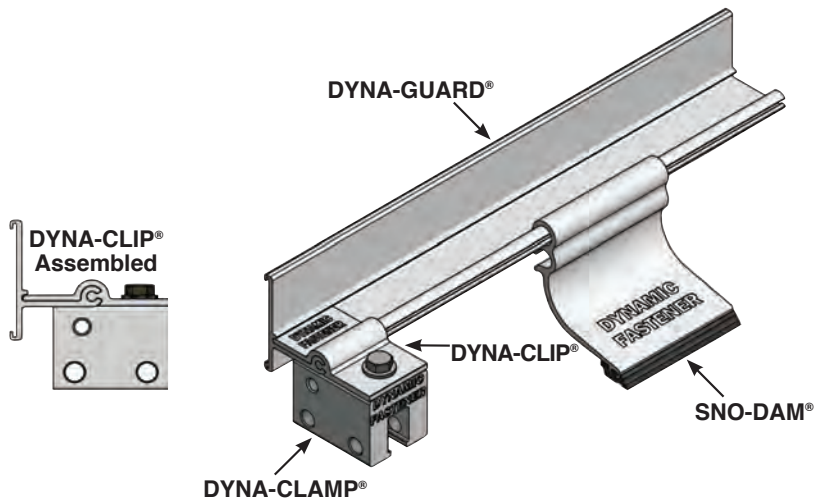
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# Rollforming in the Digital Age

## Marketing Your Metal-Forming Shop Online

■ By James Charles, E-Impact Marketing

**R**ollforming is automated, precise, high-tech, and high-speed. Great rollforming businesses stay up to date with what their customers need and are constantly improving their processes to deliver better products, faster. But while the machines on your shop floor are digital, your marketing may not be.

Every month, tens of thousands of people search for metal roofing panels, standing seam roofs, corrugated metal, and related products. Digital marketing lets rollformers capture existing search demand instead of relying solely on relationships, referrals, or word of mouth.

Rollforming is already digital manufacturing. Digital marketing is how you get chosen.

### MARKETING BASICS FOR ROLLFORMERS

Although digital marketing is important for most builders, for rollformers, it can look a little different than setting up a simple optimized website. Because rollformers serve both contractors and consumers, their marketing needs to address both audiences. Relationships with contractors develop differently from relationships with consumers, and your online presence should reflect those differences.

Consumers are more likely to begin purchasing decisions with a simple Google search. In contrast, contractors or other B2B (business-to-business) partners usually already have a pretty good idea of what they want and might

already have a supplier they're using. Therefore, they're less likely to start a search from scratch. The channels you market in should reflect this difference.

For B2B relationships, you're going to want to focus more on outbound marketing, or a marketing strategy that pushes information about your business out rather than relying on your website or social media to pull customers in to you. Outbound marketing can look like email outreach, attending tradeshow, and posting on LinkedIn.

Because consumers are more likely to find you on a Google search, and because your B2B customers will eventually land on your website, there are some important things you need to make sure you have optimized and owned on your website spaces before you begin reaching out to potential customers.

#### 1. Define Your Products and Capabilities Clearly

Overall, your website should answer contractor questions in 30 seconds: What do you roll? How fast? How do I order?

For consumers, at minimum, you should make sure you're including information on what profiles and colors, gauges and material options, and standard trims or custom capabilities are available.

At the same time, your site's content should emphasize lead time, turnaround time, delivery, and other logistics like warranty. These details matter to contractors and those who want to provide the best possible service to their own customers.



View of machine inside Legacy Metal Center's shop. COURTESY OF LEGACY METAL CENTER

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## Closer Look ))

Contractors are going to care a lot about price, delivery, and fulfillment capabilities, while consumers are going to care more about visuals and project examples. Your website should demonstrate your trustworthiness in both areas.

### 2. Visual Proof: Show Panels in Real Applications

Rollformers sell materials or components, not finished buildings. Therefore, it's important for you to show what profiles, colors, and gauges are available. At the same time, it is helpful if you can also show images of the products in completed buildings.

In general, for B2B buyers, visuals matter less than logistics like pricing, lead times, and reliability. But we're all human, and photos tell stories and improve trust and credibility in a product.



*Photos tell stories and improve trust and credibility in a product. Roofing project completed with Legacy Metal Center Metal Panels.* COURTESY OF LEGACY METAL CENTER

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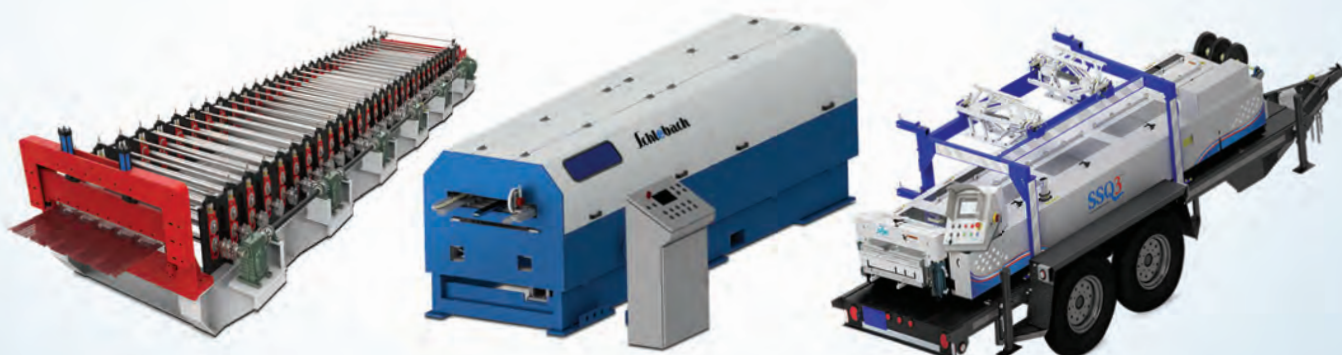
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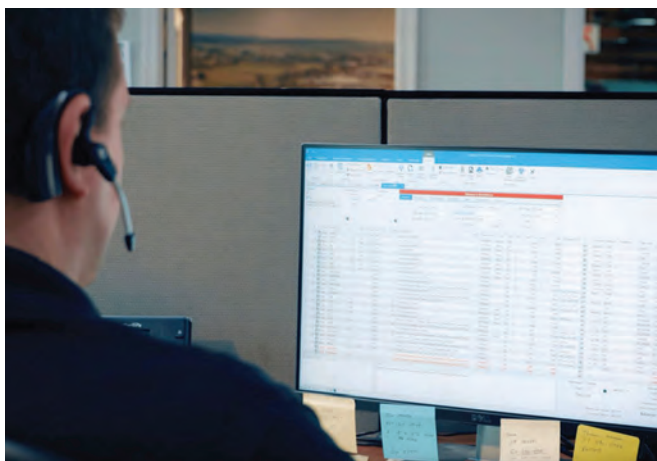
### Visually, for Contractors, be sure to include:

- profile diagrams + installed examples
- delivery process
- ordering portal screenshots

### Visually, for Consumers, include:

- finished roofs/buildings
- color visualizer
- project gallery

One other feature that can be useful on websites for both contractors and consumers is a featured projects gallery. Highlighting jobs that were completed by your contractor partners using your panels helps consumers see examples of products in real projects. A gallery is also a nice way to support your contractor partners' work.



View of Paradigm ERP. COURTESY OF PARAGON COMPUTING SOLUTIONS

### 3. Build the Right Call to Action

The call to action (CTA) on your website should make it clear what you want buyers to do next. For most rollformers, that action isn't "buy now", it's request a quote or start a conversation.

Including an easy-to-access quote request form, as well as a phone number, creates a simple path for both contractors and consumers to reach out. The fewer steps it takes to request pricing or information, the more likely visitors are to follow through.

If you're selling to contractors, you might also want to use a tool that allows contractors to submit orders directly. A contractor or order portal directly on your site is helpful to reduce office workload. Tools like Paradigm ERP (<https://goparagon.com/paradigm-erp/>) make this possible and simplify the process for everyone!

### 4. Strengthen Your Local SEO

In a rollforming operation, Local SEO and your Google Business Profile will play a significant role in your marketing efforts. Most often, panels are rolled fairly near the final job

site; they are rarely transported across the country. Therefore, people are going to look for a rollformer who is in their region to provide their panels.

To optimize your Local SEO, make sure information about your business is clear and consistent across platforms. Your business name, address, phone number, and website URL should be listed exactly the same on your website, your Google Business Profile (GBP), your social media, and on any other local directory you might be on.

You also want to make sure that your website itself clearly lists the service area that you operate in, so that search engines have another indicator of which regions they should be showing your website to searches in.

### 5. Leverage Reviews, Testimonials, and Case Studies

If you're working with contractors, other contractors are going to want to know you provide a smooth experience. Same for consumers. Reviews and testimonials are essential for trust and for bumping up your ranking in Google search results. Google favors businesses with more recent and higher numbers of positive reviews.

Case studies and project examples are another way to show proof of execution and reliability. These will help show the types of jobs that you do and the types of packages that you deliver. You want to show that you do this work, can do the type of work that someone is looking for, and that you have successful products and deliveries under your belt.

## HOW TO ATTRACT NEW CONTRACTORS

Contractors rarely start by searching for a new rollforming partner. You need to stay visible and prove your credibility before they need a supplier, so that your shop is the first name in their mind when they're ready for a new supplier. Showcasing your equipment and capabilities online can attract new orders in the long run.

### Videos:

#### Let the Machine Do the Talking

Video can also help close the gap with B2B buyers, not by showing every hydraulic detail, but by demonstrating professionalism, scale, and the customer experience.

A simple shop or delivery walkthrough, combined with real-world installed examples, can reinforce trust and make it easier for contractors to choose you.

### LinkedIn:

#### Be Where Your Buyers Are Online

LinkedIn can be especially useful for reaching architects, general contractors, and suppliers in your region. Posting updates about new products, available profiles, or recent projects helps keep your shop visible to other professionals who may need a rollforming partner.

**Direct Outreach: Build Relationships Early**

In many cases, contractors communicate through email long before they search for a new supplier. Targeted cold outreach to contractors in your service area can be an effective way to introduce your business and start new conversations, especially when supported by a strong website and clear product information.

**HOW BUYERS FIND ROLLFORMERS TODAY**

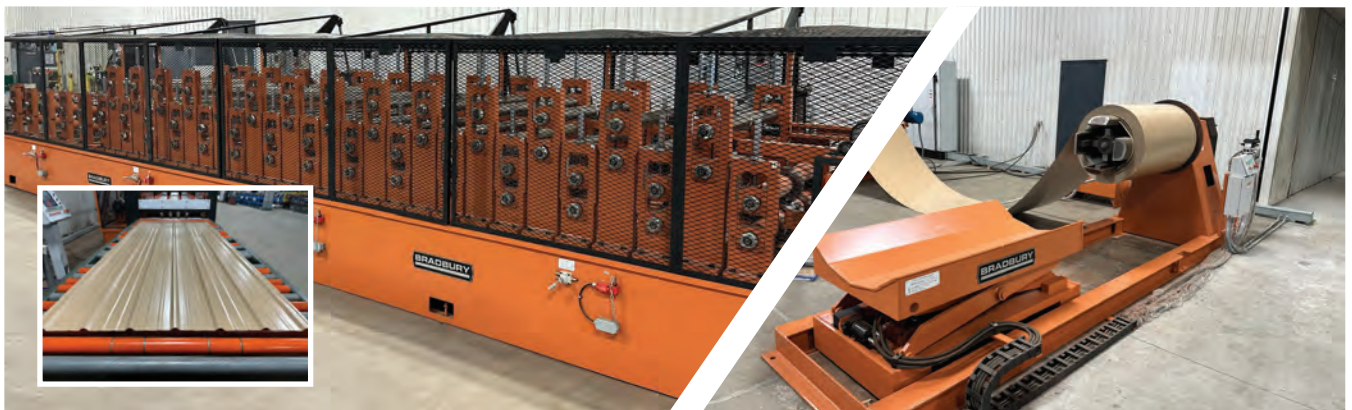
You run a successful roll-forming business because you're good at staying up to date with technology and the needs of metal builders. Digital marketing is just another way to extend your investment in your business and customers. The shops that can show their work online and reach out successfully to contractors and consumers will gain more than searches and attention; they'll win trust.. **RF**

*James Charles is the co-owner and COO of E-Impact Marketing, an internet marketing company based in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, that specializes in serving small- to medium-sized businesses.*



**View of precision rollforming in workshop.** COURTESY OF PARAGON COMPUTING SOLUTIONS

*A former Pennsylvania-based roofer, he's since transitioned into helping builders and construction companies grow their businesses through effective online strategies.*



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# System Upgrade

Protect your operations with planned controls upgrades

■ By Matt Werner, Senior Manager of Sales & Marketing, The Bradbury Group

**M**aintaining long-term operational stability should be a priority for your operation. As equipment ages, older control systems, such as legacy PLCs, HMI/CTC screens, servo drives, industrial PCs and outdated control hardware can quietly become significant risks to that stability.

Without a planned controls upgrade, these aging systems can lead to unexpected failures, extended downtime and difficult-to-source replacement parts. In many cases, the difference between being down for a single day versus an entire week comes down to whether a controls-upgrade was proactively planned or handled reactively.

To ensure continued reliability and long-term supportability, it's important to begin planning for modern controls upgrades before problems arise.

## WHY UPGRADING YOUR CONTROLS MATTERS

Upgrading outdated controls is one of the most effective ways to protect your production line from unplanned downtime. A modern control platform provides several key advantages:

- Improved reliability – Eliminate the need to hunt for discontinued or hard-to-find components.
- Enhanced reliability – New hardware and software reduce faults, failures and performance slowdowns.
- Better diagnostics and performance – Modern systems offer clearer data, improved accuracy and easier troubleshooting.
- Long-term supportability – Machine manufacturers and control system manufacturers can support modern platforms for years to come.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE BRADBURY GROUP



Because controls upgrades require engineering, planning, hardware procurement and coordination, lead times can vary depending on system age, complexity and current supply conditions. Starting the conversation early allows for a smoother transition and helps maximize production disruptions.

Quality machine manufacturers complete controls upgrade regularly and can plan and execute these projects efficiently to meet your timeline and operational needs. The goal should be to support your operations today while helping you build a stronger, more stable control system for the future. **RF**

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# Market Growth

## What the Standing Seam Roofing Market Growth Means Inside the Shop

■ By Rollforming Magazine Staff

Standing seam roofing didn't grow by accident—and it didn't grow without rollformers. As demand for standing seam panels continues to expand, the conversation naturally shifts from “why the market wants it” to “how it gets made efficiently, accurately, and profitably.” For metal panel manufacturers, standing seam isn't just another profile. It's a production commitment that touches equipment selection, shop layout, staffing, and long-term strategy.

We've followed this evolution, documenting how standing seam roofing systems, roll forming technology, and manufacturing businesses have grown together.

### STANDING SEAM DEMAND SHOWS UP IN THE SHOP

From the rollformer's perspective, standing seam growth is visible long before market reports catch up. It shows up in:

- Requests for longer panel lengths
- Demand for tighter tolerances
- Increased interest in snap-lock and mechanical seam profiles
- Contractors asking for on-site roll forming support

*Metal Roofing Magazine* coverage consistently positions standing seam as a high-performance, architectural roofing solution. That positioning carries real consequences for manufacturers. When standing seam is specified, there's little tolerance for inconsistency—panels must



*The Metal Roofing Alliance educates building owners about the benefits of metal roofing systems.*  
COURTESY OF THE METAL ROOFING ALLIANCE.

lock cleanly, seam heights must match, and coatings must arrive undamaged. That places the burden squarely on fabrication.

Coil quality plays a major role in meeting those expectations. Coil width and thickness directly influence the quality of the finished product and the performance of the roll-forming machine. As you know, even small variations in coil dimensions can affect how accurately panels are formed and how well seams align in the field. For standing seam systems, where panel engagement and dimensional accuracy are critical, consistent coil specifications help ensure panels form correctly and maintain proper overlap and structural

rigidity.

Material consistency also affects production efficiency. Thickness variations between coils can require machine adjustments, and running material that is thicker than expected without adjusting dies may scar the panel surface or damage the coating. Because of this, coil specified with minimal thickness tolerances to maintain a more consistent product from run to run is preferred. Reliable coil sourcing ultimately helps manufacturers deliver the uniform panels that standing seam roofing demands.

For rollformers, standing seam isn't just a roofing trend; it's a quality expectation.

## EDUCATION DRIVES DEMAND—AND DEMAND DRIVES EQUIPMENT DECISIONS

The Metal Roofing Alliance has played a role in expanding consumer awareness of metal roofing systems, particularly in residential markets. “Standing seam metal roofing offers homeowners unmatched durability, energy efficiency, and aesthetic appeal, making it a long-term investment that adds value, protects against the elements, and enhances curb appeal in a market that increasingly values sustainability and resilience,” explains MRA Executive Director Renee Ramey.

While the MRA doesn’t address roll forming directly, its education efforts contribute to a steady increase in homeowners and specifiers choosing

concealed-fastener systems.

For rollformers, that education translates into more standing seam orders—and more questions about production capacity. Shops that once focused on exposed-fastener panels increasingly find standing seam moving from “special order” to “core product.”

That shift often forces a decision:

- Modify existing equipment
- Add dedicated standing seam machines

Invest in multi-profile capability  
As we’ve shown, growth in standing seam demand tends to push manufacturers toward more versatile, purpose-built machinery.

Roll Forming Is the Standing Seam Enabler

Standing seam roofing exists at scale because roll forming made it practical.

Early on, stationary machines dominated production, limiting panel length and increasing handling. That changed when portable roll formers entered the market.

The first portable double-lock standing seam machine in the U.S. was built in the 1970s. That development allowed panels to be run to exact length at the jobsite—eliminating splices, reducing waste, and speeding installation. From a manufacturing standpoint, it also created new service models: supplying panels directly to contractors or rolling panels on location.

Since then, roll forming technology has continued to evolve in ways that directly support standing seam growth:

- Improved drive systems
- Cleaner profile transitions
- Better material control
- Faster setup and changeover

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## Closer Look ))

Each advancement has lowered the friction between demand and production.

### MODERN EQUIPMENT REFLECTS MARKET REALITY

Today's standing seam roll forming equipment reflects what the market demands: flexibility without sacrificing precision. We've documented how manufacturers combine stationary and portable machines to serve different segments of the market.

For example:

Portable roll formers allow custom panel lengths, reduced transportation risk, and jobsite production.

Stationary machines support higher volumes, consistent output, and stocking programs.

As you know, rollformers often operate both stationary and portable machines, using portable machines for remote jobs while relying on shop equipment for

throughput and efficiency.

New Tech Machinery is one example frequently referenced for innovation, including early adoption of polyurethane drive systems and the development of multi-profile machines capable of producing standing seam alongside other panel types. Machines like the SSQ II MultiPro reflect a broader industry trend: fewer machines doing more work.

### STANDING SEAM IS NOT ONE PROFILE

From the shop's point of view, "standing seam" is a category, not a product. It includes:

- Mechanical standing seam
- Snap-lock standing seam
- Nail-strip standing seam
- Multiple seam heights, widths, and gauges

Each variation affects tooling, coil handling, and downstream compatibility.

Successful rollformers understand not just how to form a panel, but how that panel will behave in the field.

As standing seam moves deeper into architectural and engineered applications, manufacturers are under pressure to deliver panels that perform consistently across long runs, temperature swings, and complex roof geometries.

That's not marketing—it's machine setup, maintenance, and operator skill.

Standing Seam Rewards Prepared Shops

Standing seam panels typically command higher value than exposed-fastener systems, but they also demand more from the manufacturer. Shops that succeed in this segment tend to share common traits:

- Investment in reliable, purpose-built equipment
- Attention to tolerances and profile accuracy

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- Willingness to support contractors with consistent supply
- Understanding of how production choices affect installation

As you know, standing seam growth, like other profiles, doesn't favor shortcuts. It favors manufacturers who treat roll forming as both a technical discipline and a business strategy.

**CONCLUSION: STANDING SEAM GROWTH STARTS AT THE MACHINE**

Standing seam roofing continues to grow because it performs—and because rollformers make it possible at scale. Consumer education, architectural demand, and industry promotion may drive interest, but it's roll forming technology that turns demand into product.

For metal panel manufacturers,



A grey standing seam metal roof installed by South Texas Metal Roofing. COURTESY OF THE METAL ROOFING ALLIANCE.

standing seam isn't just another profile to add. It's a signal that the market expects precision, flexibility, and consistency. Shops that align their equipment, processes, and expertise with those

expectations aren't chasing the market—they're building it.

When the standing seam market grows, it's often the roll-forming shop that feels it first. **RF**



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# Slitters & Shears

How coil slitter and shear selection shape productivity in the roll-forming shop

■ By Rollforming Magazine Staff

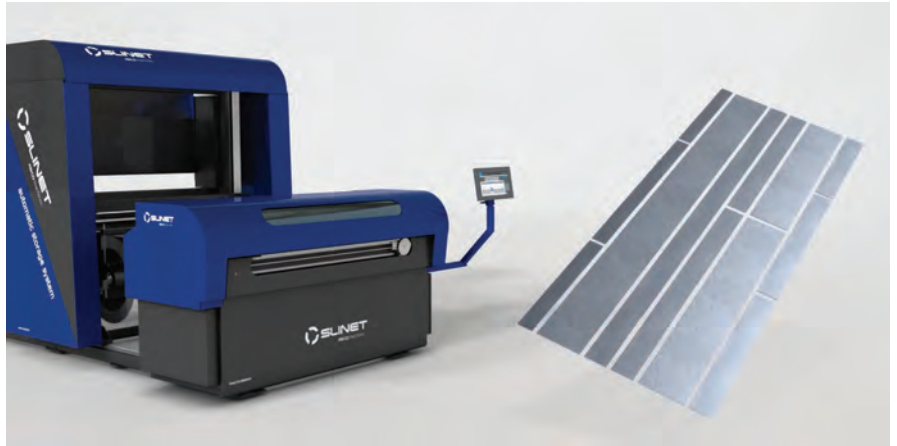
## PART 1 — WHAT SHOPS SHOULD LOOK FOR IN COIL SLITTERS AND SHEARS

Every rollforming shop knows that quality starts at the coil. Often, before metal reaches the roll former, it has to be handled, cut, or slit — and that's where coil slitters and shears become essential pieces of your workflow. Choosing the right equipment means thinking beyond the purchase price and focusing instead on how those tools fit your process, volume, material, and daily rhythm.

First, think through the type of cutting your shop needs. Shears and slitters may seem interchangeable, but each serves a slightly different production purpose. A shear — especially at the front end of a forming line — lets you cut material cleanly to length or width before it goes through the former. In some cases, a front-end shear can actually prevent waste by ensuring only the footage you need is being fed into the machine. Some controllers can eliminate post-cut waste by feeding only the required amount of material into the machine.

Slitters, by contrast, are designed to take a wide coil and turn it into several narrower strips or coils in a single pass. If your shop runs frequent jobs that require multiple widths from the same master coil, a slitter saves handling time, reduces material damage, and minimizes setup once the machine is ready. When paired with coil handling systems, these slit coils can be staged efficiently so operators spend more time making components.

Modern slitters come in configurations ranging from manual to fully automatic. For roll-forming shops doing high volumes with repeated widths, investing in automatic knife adjustment and



*This illustration shows how a slitter with cross-cutting capability can maximize material use and minimize waste. When the Slinet is paired with the Slinet Optimizer, the software effectively combines multiple orders to optimize the cutting process, making it ideal for producing small batch sizes efficiently. With the optional partial cutting feature, it can automatically optimize and cut various lengths and widths of orders, minimizing waste.* PHOTO COURTESY OF ASCO USA, INC.

nesting software means less downtime and lower scrap, because the machine calculates optimal slit positions and blade setups. Pairing manifolds of slit coils with a coil farm or automated storage system can dramatically speed changeovers and ensure a steady feed to downstream operations.

Another selection factor is capacity and compatibility. Slitters and shears are built for specific coil widths and thicknesses, and it's important to match a machine's capacity with what you regularly process. If you buy equipment that's under-sized for your materials, you'll be forced into workaround cuts or multiple passes. Oversizing might feel like future-proofing, but it also costs more upfront and can create its own challenges if it doesn't fit your current needs.

Safety and operator experience also weigh into the equation. Machines with built-in safety interlocks and guards protect operators by preventing operation when doors or guard panels are open.

Even features as simple as easy-to-reach controls and ergonomic adjustment points help keep operators comfortable, safe, and productive throughout the workday. In the broader context of material handling and shop layout, placing slitters and shears close to relevant decoilers and roll formers can reduce transport waste and operator motion, keeping the entire line moving efficiently.

In short, when you're evaluating coil slitters and shears, think about how your shop operates and what your plans are. A tool that integrates seamlessly with your workflow, reduces handling steps, and supports consistent throughput will benefit your shop far more than the least expensive option on the floor.

## PART 2 — WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN OPERATING COIL SLITTERS AND SHEARS

Once you've selected the right tools, the next challenge is using them in a way that maximizes uptime, accuracy, and

safety. Slitters and shears become steady contributors to your production only when they're operated with good habits and an eye for detail.

One of the most practical operational principles is to organize these machines within your shop layout so material flows logically from coil storage into processing. Staging slit coils near their target decoilers or storage racks removes unnecessary steps in handling and allows operators to remain productive rather than chasing materials around the shop. Taking cues from principles of lean movement, every extra walk an operator makes to fetch material is lost production time.

Training also strongly influences outcomes with slitters and shears. Automatic systems often come with software and nesting — but those advantages only materialize when



An up-close look at an Acu-Form post-cut shear. COURTESY OF ACU-FORM.

operators understand how to use them. Training should cover blade setup, safe operation, how to judge material conditions such as coil flatness, and

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when to adjust for thickness or coating variations. A well-trained operator doesn't just run the machine — they anticipate issues before they cause waste or stoppages.

Material handling plays a major role, too. Shops that minimize coil damage through careful storage and handling tend to see fewer quality issues when cutting or slitting. Keeping coil edges clean, stored properly (whether “eye to the sky” or staged for decoiling), and moved only as needed helps protect both the coil and the tooling downstream, where scraps from nicks or dents can lead to imperfect slits or shears.

Maintaining your equipment also supports consistent performance. Sharp blades and properly aligned cutting mechanisms reduce burrs and edge deformation. Tension and alignment adjustments should be regularly checked



**A Slinet slitter paired with the Slinet Automatic Storage System.** COURTESY OF ASCO USA, INC.

to ensure the machine feeds metal straight and true. Even in automated systems, routine calibration prevents drift over time and keeps cuts accurate shifts after shift.

Safety in operation cannot be overstated. Coil slitters and shears deal with heavy materials and sharp edges, and every movement of material presents a risk. Keeping guards in place, observing emergency stop protocols, and making sure operators understand the hazards associated with coil handling protects not just the machine but the

people running it.

Finally, shop leaders should remember that these tools are part of a wider system. Slitters feed material to roll formers. Shears determine how components are made. Coil handling equipment upstream affects how efficiently both tools can operate. Thinking in terms of the whole production cycle — from coil arrival to finished components — helps ensure slitters and shears aren't bottlenecks but enablers of a productive metal forming operation. **RF**

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**Closeup look at an Acu-Form precut shear.** COURTESY OF ACU-FORM.



### E-IMPACT MARKETING ANNOUNCES COMPLETION OF OWNERSHIP TRANSITION

E-Impact Marketing, a full-service digital marketing agency founded in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 2015, has officially completed a transition in ownership. As of February 4, 2026, the company is now led by new co-owners Eric Wenger, James Charles, and Joel Steele, who succeeded the founder of E-Impact, Chris Stoltzfus. Stoltzfus stepped down as CEO of E-Impact to spend more time at other business ventures and to focus on writing and teaching.

E-Impact Marketing helps small and mid-sized businesses grow online through services like website design, SEO, and content creation. Founded by Chris Stoltzfus in 2015, E-Impact has since relocated its headquarters to downtown Lancaster and opened an office in Brooklyn, New York, to better serve its diverse client base. The company's commitment to client success has earned national recognition, including spots for E-Impact on the Inc. 5000 list in 2024 and 2025, the 2025 Financial Times Fastest Growing Companies List, and recognition as a Google Premier Partner in 2025.

The new owners aim to build upon the strong foundation established by Stoltzfus, bringing fresh perspectives and specialized expertise to drive future growth for both the company and its customers. This change marks a new era for the company; the collective leadership of Wenger, Charles, and Steele will shape not only E-Impact's future but also its role in the evolving digital marketing industry.

For James Charles, Co-owner and COO, "stewardship" rather than "ownership" defines his vision of the future for E-Impact. He says, "This business is an avenue to serve and bless a lot of people, and our goal is to protect it and ensure it reaches its full potential."

Joel Steele, Co-owner and CPO (Chief People Officer), is most excited about connecting with more people as E-Impact grows. For Steele, "The future of E-Impact starts with the people. As we grow and shift with the ever-changing digital landscape, we get to keep recruiting amazing individuals to help take us into the future. Our people are what set us apart from other organizations."

Together, the team is set up to continue delivering meaningful

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and measurable results for clients in sectors such as storage sheds and garages, pole barns and roll forming, and construction and outdoor living. They also have their eyes on what's next. As Steele puts it, "In the future, I see us adopting new profit centers, perfecting our craft, and always being on the front lines of what the digital world demands of us."

This new leadership team is strategically guiding E-Impact Marketing towards continued growth.

### MRA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RENEE RAMEY AWARDED TOP HONOR

Renee Ramey, executive director of the Metal Roofing Alliance (MRA), recently received one of the Metal Construction Association's (MCA) highest honors—the Larry A. Swaney Award—at MCA's 2026 Winter Meeting held in San Antonio,



Renee Ramey (left) 2026 Award Winner with Lee Ann Slattery, MCA Chair. PHOTO COURTESY OF MCA

Texas.

Ramey was honored with the Larry A. Swaney Award for her leadership role in working to grow the residential metal roofing market. In the U.S. alone, market share for metal roofing has risen from 3% at MRA's inception to now capturing over 17% of the overall residential roofing market. This top honor is bestowed upon an outstanding industry professional for their contributions to the success of the association and the betterment of the metal construction industry.

In her role, Ramey guides MRA's focus on rigorous quality and uniformity standards and helps drive consumer and homeowner awareness and adoption in the U.S. and Canada by promoting the many benefits of high quality metal roofing. MRA works together with contractors, manufacturers, roofing coalitions, and industry partners to

highlight the advantages of residential metal roofing as a sustainable, long lasting and resilient option. Ramey has served as executive director of the MRA since 2017 and has long been recognized for her leadership role in the metal industry.

MCA also recognized long-time MRA member Rob Haddock, CEO and founder of S-5!, by awarding him the Patrick R. Bush Service Award. This award honors the outstanding volunteer contributions of an individual from an MCA member company. This award was created to commemorate Patrick R. Bush, a significant and long-serving member of the MCA board.

Haddock's career as a renowned metal roofing expert, inventor and industry pioneer spans nearly four decades, earning him a long list of honors including an early induction into the Metal Construction Hall of Fame.

### DMI DIRECT METALS, LLC ACQUIRES LAKESIDE CONSTRUCTION FASTENERS

DMI Direct Metals, LLC has announced the strategic acquisition of Lakeside Construction Fasteners (LCF). This union brings together two powerhouses in the metal construction and industrial fastener markets to create a premier national distribution and manufacturing group.

### Leadership Continuity: A Partnership of Strength

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continuity of the leadership that built LCF into an industry leader providing alternative fasteners-foam solutions. Eric Velliquette will continue in his role as President and Co-Founder of Lakeside Construction Fasteners.

Working alongside Andrew Mullen, CEO of DMI Direct Metals, Eric will continue to lead the LCF team, ensuring that the innovation, product integrity, and personal service that Lakeside is known for remain at the forefront of the company's mission.

"I am excited to lead Lakeside Construction Fasteners into this next chapter alongside Andrew and the DMI team, says Eric Velliquette. This partnership provides the capital and resources necessary to accelerate our growth while staying true to the values and quality that our customers have trusted for years."

**Strategic Evolution**

Following the recent restructuring of Direct Metals Inc. into DMI Direct Metals, LLC, this acquisition represents the first step in an aggressive growth strategy supported by our new investment partners and internal leadership.

**What It Means for Partner-Customers:**

- Unmatched Product Range: From

DMI's architectural metal and low slope fastener solutions to Lakeside's specialized wood-to-metal and metal-to-metal fasteners, we now offer a complete system for the building envelope.

- Expanded Capabilities: The investment brings new regional locations, broader product lines, and enhanced manufacturing capabilities.

- Seamless Continuity: Our core operations at DMI-LCF, including dedicated sales and support teams will remain unchanged ensuring that project timelines, pricing agreements, and delivery schedules proceed without interruption.

**A Shared Vision**

With Andrew Mullen as CEO and Eric Velliquette as President of Lakeside Construction Fasteners, the leadership is more engaged than ever. The company is committed to the success of its employees, its partner-suppliers, and its partner-customers.

**Kris Rose Promoted To National Sales Manager**

Additionally, Lakeside Construction Fasteners (LCF) has announced the promotion of Kris Rose to the position of National Sales Manager, effective March 13, 2026.

As the organization continues to evolve,



*Kris Rose, National Sales Manager*

it remains committed to strengthening its leadership team with individuals who embody the core values of excellence, integrity, and relentless service. Kris has consistently demonstrated these qualities, proving to be an invaluable asset to the LCF family.

In this new role, Kris will oversee our national sales strategy, managing our regional teams and driving the expansion of our footprint across the country. Kris brings a wealth of industry knowledge and a proven track record of building meaningful, long-term relationships with our customer-partners. This transition marks a pivotal step in our mission to remain the industry leader in high-performance metal building component alternative solutions. **RF**



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### ONEPOUR™ FOUNDATION ANCHOR FROM PROFOOTER

For pole barn builders and contractors working with post-frame construction, ProFooter Foundations has introduced the OnePour™ Foundation Anchor — a patent-pending solution that addresses one of the most persistent challenges in post-frame work: achieving superior uplift resistance without the cost and complexity of a two-pour process.

The anchor combines truss plate technology with rebar in a single integrated assembly that attaches to the post using only a framing hammer. Once placed in the footing hole, concrete is poured once, fully encapsulating both the anchor and post in a monolithic mass — eliminating the need for a second concrete truck and second pour entirely.

Independent testing indicates the OnePour™ anchor delivers up to three times greater uplift resistance compared to traditional rebar-through-post installations, with an allowable design uplift capacity of 8,888 lbs for wood posts. The system also provides meaningful protection against lateral pressure and punch-through.

Suitable for pole barns, pavilions,

carports, decks, and pergolas, the three-step installation — dig, place, pour — is straightforward enough for both large crews and solo builders.

[Pro-Footer.com](http://Pro-Footer.com)



### SMARTCUT™ TOUCH SCREEN GLOVES

Brass Knuckle has combined touch screen compatibility and rugged protection, dexterity, and grip in its SmartCut Touch Screen Gloves.

The Brass Knuckle® SmartCut™ BKCRT201 Touch Screen Gloves feature medium cut protection, excellent dexterity and grip, and special touch screen fingertips. This facilitates device usage while providing all the safety and durability needed on the job. Because workers can keep their gloves on to handle screen work, they don't have to remember to put them back on — a win for safety compliance.

Just as technology has integrated into virtually every aspect of life, touch screens have become increasingly visible in manufacturing and construction environments.

Multiple manufacturers provide rugged devices designed especially for the harsh conditions of the construction market. Similarly, SmartCut™ Touch Screen Gloves are made to protect hands while providing access to and usability with computer touch screens.

In addition to their touchscreen capability, these gloves feature ultra-

high molecular-weight polyethylene fiber, which offers ANSI cut resistance level A2 protection. Thinner, 13-gauge material facilitates dexterity. Excellent dry-grip functionality is enhanced by a non-sticky polyurethane (PU) coating on the palm and fingers, which also enhances puncture protection and abrasion resistance. All without adding bulk, reducing touch sensitivity or negatively impacting touchscreen compatibility.

[www.brassknuckleprotection.com](http://www.brassknuckleprotection.com)



### SENTRY SELF-STORAGE LATCH AND COMBO LATCH

Central States Inc. has launched a new Sentry self-storage combo latch, designed to deliver superior flexibility, durability, and security for self-storage applications.

The Sentry latch was engineered with versatility in mind. The design enables operators to use pad locks or cylinder locks on the same apparatus, or transition to a keyed bezel lock without the need to replace the latch, providing flexibility as security needs evolve.

For enhanced durability, the new combo latch is manufactured in not only a yellow zinc option, but also a stainless-steel option for significantly higher mechanical strength and corrosion resistance than traditional zinc latches. Stainless steel construction is tested to last three to five times longer than zinc alloy and is more resistant to corrosion in humid or salt-exposed environments.

Additionally, the latch tongue is compatible with magnetic locking systems and security technologies, while a 90-degree tongue angle adds an extra layer of protection against forced entry.

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