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SOLVING POST ROT

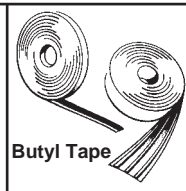
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# Features & Benefits

## New Book Educates Home Buyers About Post-Frame Residences

Welcome to the August issue of Frame Building News. Post-frame construction has evolved considerably over the years.

Pole barns started as simple agricultural structures. Early structures were built with trunks from native trees that resist decay and boards or corrugated metal for walls. These were functional, often temporary, buildings that were designed to do a job.

Today, a post-frame building can be anything from a basic warming shed to a beautiful custom home. Native tree trunks have been replaced with highly engineered laminated wood columns, and what was

once a simple construct has evolved into a modern, highly engineered process.

One of the difficulties confronting post-frame construction is communicating the changes and possibilities of this type of construction to home buyers, zoning officials and lenders. Regarding home buyers — we've accepted that challenge!

We just sent our third book in the Pro Tips On series to the printer. Titled *Pro Tips On: Your Post-Frame Home*, the book is now available through Amazon in both hard copy and digital formats.

With a recession, increasing interest rates and inflation, we are entering an interesting time. But every challenge is also

an opportunity. The cost savings offered by post-frame construction over other construction methods may present an opportunity to increase market penetration in residential construction. But home buyers will not buy what they don't understand.

Please feel free to share information about *Pro Tips On: Your Post-Frame Home*. The first step in selling a post-frame home is communicating that this IS NOT a pole barn. That is the basis of this new book. Help us help you. And let's grow the market presence of post frame, together. **FBN**

Gary Reichert  
Publisher

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ON THE COVER:  
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Cover design by Kevin Ulrich



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

**NEW BOOK  
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## Industry Partners



# 5★ Equine Facilities

Horse Barns On Parade

By Frame Building News Staff



## Keller Barn Upperville, Virginia

**T**his handsome barn's owners had one request: that the project be completed quickly and King Construction complied.

This is a 38' x 52' x 10' barn with four stalls, tack room, feed room, wash stall and utility room.

The stall backs are tongue and groove southern yellow pine; stall partitions are of double tongue and groove pine with powder-coated grills. The stall fronts are King standard stalls with steel frame doors and dropdown yokes and mesh.

The siding is pine board and batten. The roof is standing seam with 4' painted steel and copper cupola and louvers.

The floor is concrete except for the stalls, which have rubber mats on stone dust.

The custom doors are cedar split with tempered glass and crossbucks.



Photos courtesy of King Construction, LLC





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## Iron Gate Farm Allentown, New Jersey

**T**his distinguished King Construction build is a 36' x 36' x 10' stable with an 80' x 180' x 18' indoor riding arena attached.

It features six stalls, a tack room, feed room, wash stall and lounge. Upstairs is living space in the form of an apartment and storage.

The stable stalls are tongue and groove, stall front grills are mesh powder coated with swinging feed doors. Each is outfitted with a stall fan and cameras.

The floor is stone dust with rubber mats for equine comfort. It has Hardi siding with pre-painted Boral trim and architectural shingles.

The doors are powder-coated aluminum. There is a 6' cedar octagon cupola with windows and horse weathervane on the copper roof.



Photos courtesy of King Construction, LLC



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## Dutch Delight Barn Shelbyville, Kentucky

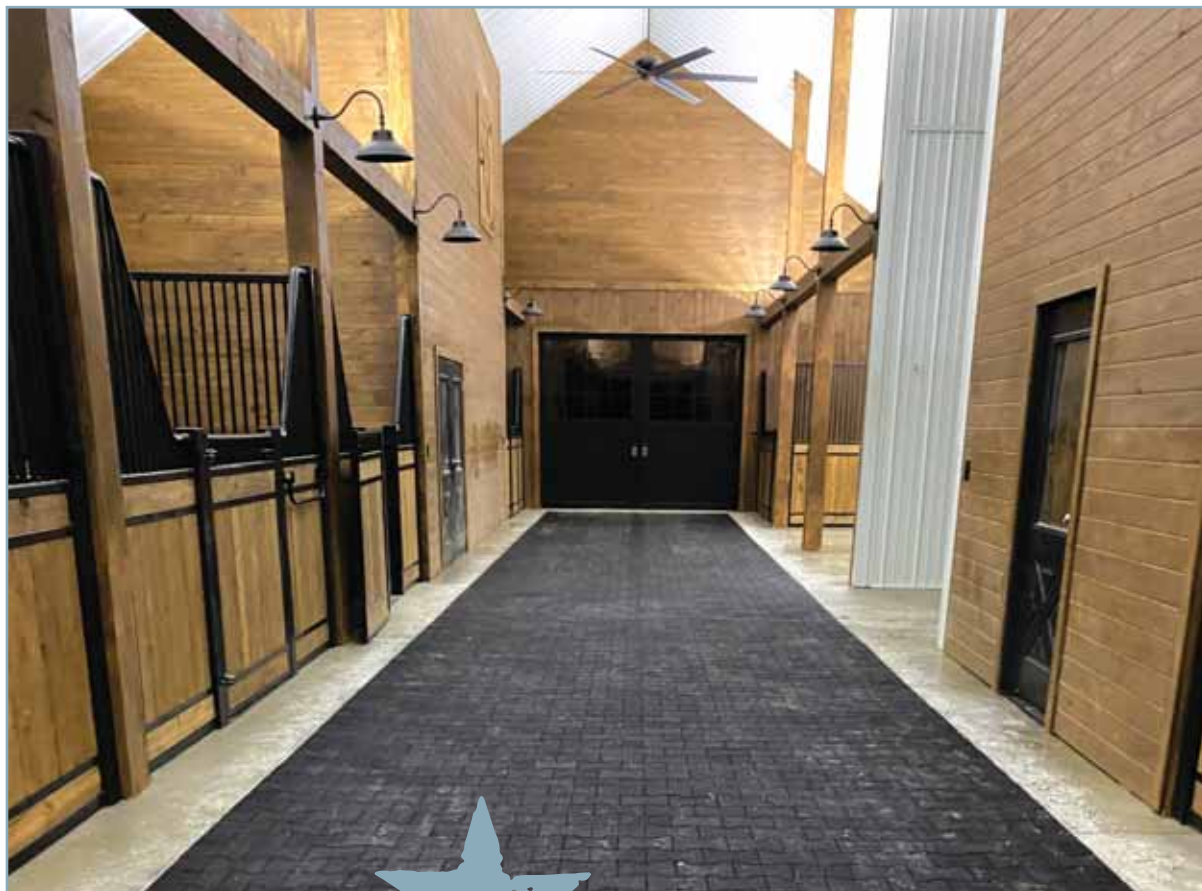
**K**entuckiana Building and Development built this barn to complement the house under construction and to match the features of the house. This Wick building boasts a custom-stamped concrete floor and Wick stalls with custom tack room and wash bay. The Dutch doors, an attractive and functional choice, are easy to work with and complete the build.



Photos courtesy of  
Kentuckiana Building and Development, LLC







## European Barn Shelbyville, Kentucky

**T**his 38" x 72" Wick custom horse barn was designed by Kentuckiana Building and Development with eye-catching highlights including custom European front stalls by Lucas Equine with a rubber paver aisleway, and all custom wood beams. The lighting is gooseneck lighting, and all LED lighting including the chandelier. This building features a kitchen and living space with two bathrooms and laundry area.

Photos courtesy of  
Kentuckiana Building and Development, LLC





## Gaier Barn Laughlintown, Pennsylvania

**T**his private barn was built by King Construction Company, LLC. The clients requested that the barn match their home in style and color as closely as possible. This is a family King had worked with before and they were relocating and needed something similar built.

It is a 34' x 32' x 10' barn with three stalls, a tack room and a closed stair to the loft for storage.

The stall backs are made of tongue and groove southern yellow pine, stall partitions are tongue and groove pine with powder-coated grills. Stall fronts are Euro-King sovereign style between columns. Each has a Nelson waterer.

The siding and trim is pine board and batten with a standing seam metal roof. The center aisle is rubber pavers set on stone dust.

There is a 3' square cupola with louvers and weathervane.

The custom doors are cedar split slider doors with tempered glass and crossbucks. **FBN**



Photos courtesy of King Construction, LLC







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# POST ROT OPTIONS

## Choosing a Long-Term Answer to Structure Foundations

■ By Anthony Brass

Post-frame buildings face much throughout their lifespan, including the elements, temperature swings, animal and machinery containment, and the conditions that increase potential for rot in the posts. When meeting with a customer, oftentimes they know the extent of the rot in these critical components of the structure.

After determining or confirming the degree of the problem or how many posts need tending to, find out which option is best and if they want to replace all the posts or only portions of those affected. The decision comes down to finding long-term solutions to rotting issues; the goal is to improve a structure so it lasts longer.

Wood is subject to rotting over time, whether it's treated or untreated. "Over time, all wood in the ground is going to fail," says President of Perma-Column, Mark Stover. "Treated wood doesn't make it last indefinitely."

The post is most susceptible below grade. The portion below ground is where the mixture of air, water and bacteria affect the post, and ultimately causes rot.

*Sleeves driven into the ground and around posts.*  
Photo courtesy of Savage Building Systems.



This rot travels as far up as the moisture goes, Stover says. “It’s not the whole post; the rotted portion may only be 2 feet.” Post-frame is designed to put wood in the ground, but potential post rot issues aren’t prevalent in every case. “Every building’s different; every location’s different,” Stover adds.

If you can’t see the rot and there still are fears, it’s in wood below ground and could be traveling up the post. Take a pencil or screwdriver into the post to see how easily it goes in. If it’s rotted there won’t be much resistance, and requires action to save it. “The structural integrity of the building needs to be addressed,” says Stover. Posts that lunge forward easily when pushed may be another sign of rot. Or, the skirt board may be soft.

Older post-frame structures should be inspected on an annual basis. “The older the building is, the more inspections you’ve got to make,” Stover cautions. He adds all with post-frame owners should be vigilant about the foundation’s condition.

“Everybody who’s got wood in the ground should be checking their posts. If you’ve got one rotted post, you probably have more than one,” Stover says, adding you’ll likely have to replace and repair it instead of taking the risk of waiting.

The potential for post rot increases based on the combination of the soil, air, moisture and other conditions. Stover says it also depends on the location of the building. “If you’re in a low-lying area you’re going to have issues. It depends on the water table and the soil conditions.”

Co-owner and Manager of Business Development of Meyer Building, Matthew Gerber, says another sign of potential rot is a noticeable sagging in the eaves and gutters. Other locations give a telltale sign. “The edge of the outside of the building gets a little ‘spongy’ if you push against it,” Gerber says. Other signs include a post that is “necking” or narrowing, or is flaking.

One overlooked factor is the trend where wood posts are sourced. Today’s

treated wood lumber companies are making posts out of younger trees from sustainable sources. Wood density in these trees is less than those that are older and grown in the past, Stover says. These newer trees grow faster and are harvested earlier so the density isn’t the same, leaving them more susceptible to rot. The wood from younger trees is not as tight, potentially affecting the strength and long-term viability of the lumber. “Wood is not the same as it was in the past,” Stover says.

### Post Solutions and Options

Owners must decide whether to solve their post rot issues permanently or for a long-term period. Their budget, product preference, and how long they desire to prolong their post-frame building determine their ultimate decision.

One option is to replace the entire rotted post. Dig down to where the rot is in the wood and cut the rot out. Place in long, precast concrete posts into the ground, substituting the wood



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# The Rot Cause

Many know how to inform another there is rot in a post, but not accurately specify the reasons why. Ken McDonnell of Post Protector said specific conditions in the ground must be present for rot to occur in posts, but first understanding decay is a priority. The action of soil-dwelling microorganisms feeding on wood fibers is the main reason rot occurs. These decay fungi are in our ecosystem to recycle the nutrients of dead plants back into the soil to fuel “new” growth. The lumber used in post-frame is technically non-living – the microorganisms innately feed on these posts.

McDonnell says there are four links to the chain of decay: oxygen, temperatures ranging between 40° and 100°F, moisture and a food source. All conditions all must be in place for these microorganisms to thrive. You have to break one of these links to prevent or stop decay. When a post is pressure-treated or chemically treated, the wood is “poisoned” to deny microorganisms access to eat. “We are trying to break the food source link,” McDonnell says.

This chemical layer applied to posts breaks down and depletes over time, leaving the wood susceptible to these fungi; their food source is available. “When you put a pressure-treated post in the ground, you know that Mother Nature will win that battle.”



*Post Protector barrier system.  
Photo courtesy of Post Protector.*

Specially designed, flexible sleeves or covers slide over and encase wooden posts from the bottom and below grade up to above grade. These separate the treated posts from soil. The sleeves, made from similar materials as landfill liners, prevent chemicals from leaching out of the post, denying the cycle of rot. These barriers stop the food source “link” while retaining the post-frame, post-in-the-ground technique.

for a permanent solution. The wood is elevated above ground; no part of the post is underground to succumb to rot. Steel-reinforcing rebar in the concrete is robotically welded to a ¼” steel powder-coated bracket that encases wood above the ground. Concrete is then poured around the precast concrete column and up to ground level. “You’re building a concrete-pier system that you’re pouring at the field level. You’re eliminating any issues with wood,” Stover says. Each affected pole can be treated this way, or all can be replaced at once.

The other option is to repair an area on a single post that’s rotted out. Dig down to the area on the post where it’s affected and cut out only the rotted portion. A ¼” steel bracket is bolted to the unaffected, solid section of the wood. The concrete is then poured into the area down around the post and up to the bottom of the bracket. “The steel brackets are powder-coated and designed to resist corrosion and weather,” says Stover. Anchor brackets with rebar are inserted into wet concrete or into an existing concrete foundation that has already been poured and cured. These can go into a concrete footer or on a floating slab.

## Wear Sleeves

When clients want a solution but have a budget, placing a steel sleeve over the rotted post is a viable solution to strengthen a weakened foundation. Repair sleeves provide a long-lasting base for a post-frame building. These reinforce and stabilize existing wood columns that have deteriorated from rot, separating the column from the soil to prevent further decay. But not all are created equal.

These high-strength sleeves are made from 10-gauge galvanized steel (G165). These include 14 corrugated bends for durability to significantly increase the life of the post column. These sleeves are also practical, as they are inserted into the ground around a column, and don’t include any digging. “The corrugated bends gives us an anchor point to push it in,” says Steve Beach, owner of Savage Building Systems. They use custom hydraulic drivers to push these sleeves into the ground around the rotted post.

The sleeves are fastened to the post above grade with 12 engineered lag bolts each with a 5,000-lb shear rating (grade 5). These are designed with built-in uplift anchors to use the building’s uplift components to solidify its foundation. The shear point is where the column meets the ground. This point is where the load of the building is transferred into the ground. A sleeve changes a shear point from “grade” to 2’ “above grade” for re-inforced strength, extending the life of a post-frame structure.

Beach further recommends using sleeves, reiterating these work in conjunction with the building. “We’re able to utilize the building’s original uplift and foundation components.”

## ‘Posting’ Further Information

Beach says they work on many older wooden farm structures to save them. Savage Building Systems also corrects any settlement issues many buildings face because of rotting posts. They use a laser to quickly detect and confirm any settlement problems due to rotting inside. “A lot of these buildings that have decay have settlement issues,” Beach cautions.

He adds you should check the doors. When a building has rot issues that compromises its settlement, he says the doors may not open correctly, further indicating a problem. Beach says in many instances the owners don’t know the building is suffering from post rot. He says a windstorm comes along, and blows a portion of the wall in. Or, they go to open the doors and decay has settled in, preventing doors from opening. He adds many of these clients are looking for quick fix that provides a long-term answer.

Beach recommends carrying your products with you to present to a client before a decision. In addition, he shows a video how these work, if the client hasn’t already seen them online.

After any presentation – and it’s clear that some posts are still strong while others are compromised from rot – the customer has to make a decision.

“It’s based on economics at that time,” Gerber says. He recommends going over





*Before & After: The left is a structure with post rot; the right is after post reinforcement and leveling. Photos courtesy of Savage Building Systems*

the prices for each option with them. Afterward, Gerber says the customers should ask themselves if they want to save their building by repairing, preserving or replacing the posts.

The location of where your work begins plays a factor. Gerber says the posts are accessible from the exterior of the building. The work starts by pulling back the steel wall of the structure or loosening it from the outside to access the base of the post. It's important to ask your client questions first about the surroundings

before repairing or replacing posts from the outside. Ask how they are using the building and if there's equipment, shop benches or shelving or other heavy obstructions near the rotted posts, Gerber says. He says to let the customer know you can access the posts from the outside so they don't have to move these items. But inform them there's additional cost to work from the outside and peel away metal or pull it up to access the ground and rotted post.

## Conclusion

Many builders focus on new construction for clients, which solves rotting issues. Some post-frame owners are simply looking to maintain their current structure and prolong its use. Probe each customer to find what they want and decide on the best course of action.

Give options with what's proven to work. Stand behind your products, and work that preserve their building. Gerber says, "Give the customer confidence that this is going to work." **FBN**

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The Third Annual Construction Rollforming Show will be held at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, October 26-27, 2022. The Show is 100% dedicated to construction roll forming, making it the place to learn about best practices, the equipment and materials that will help make your roll forming business a success.

Unlike previous years, all of this year's show passes are all-access: educational programming and exhibit hall entry are all included with the \$50 pre-registered admission. (Admission is \$75 at the door.) Families are welcome; children under 14 are admitted free with an adult.

Visit [www.constructionrollformingshow.com](http://www.constructionrollformingshow.com) for details as they develop. **FBN**

New Orleans has lifted its mandate requiring proof of vaccine or negative COVID test to enter certain businesses. Individuals are not required to wear a mask or face coverings, with the exception of healthcare facilities and long-term care settings, as specified in Federal guidelines.

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### Host Hotel:

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### Wednesday, October 26, 2022\*

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10:00-10:45	Bending Trim and Flashing	Polycarbonate Panels
11:00-11:45	Condensation Protection	Sales Process
12:00-12:45	Coil Irregularities	Ventilation and Ridge Vents
12:30	Exhibit Hall Opens	
1:00-1:45	In Demo Area: Carport Roll Forming Lines	
2:00-2:45	Sealants	Standing Seam Clamps
3:00-3:45	Using Pro Tips On as a Sales Aid	Software to Improve Quality
4:00-4:45	Fasteners Metal to Wood	Coil Gauges and Specifications
5:00	Happy Hour Starts	
5:30	Exhibit Hall Closes	
6:30	Happy Hour Ends	

### Thursday, October 27, 2022\*

8:30	Exhibit Hall Opens	
9:00-9:45	Snow Retention Types and Applications	Roll Former Maintenance
10:00-10:45	In Demo Area: Portable Roll Formers	
11:00-11:45	Software for Efficiency	Closing a Sale
12:00-12:45	Shearing Contest	
1:30	Exhibit Hall Closes	

\*Educational schedule subject to change



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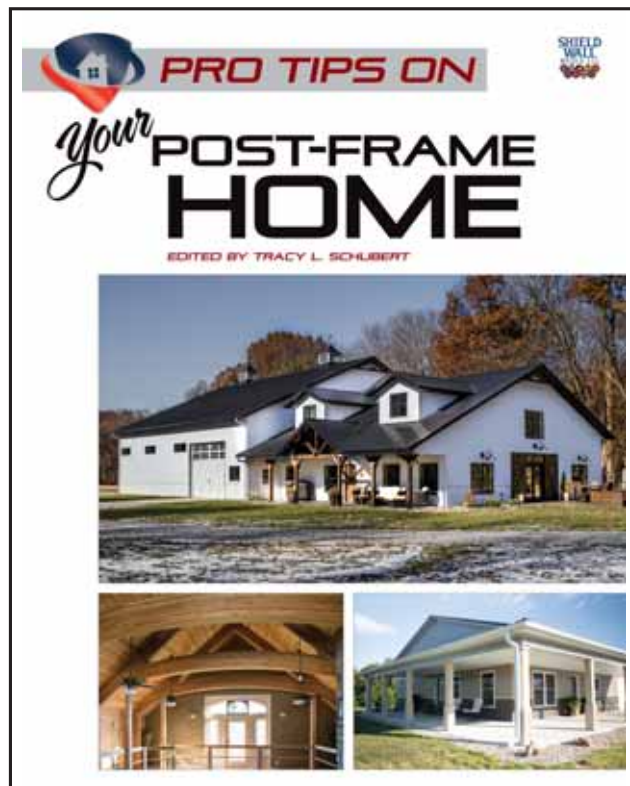
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# HORSE HEROES *Designing Dreams*

## Innovative Equine Systems Enhancing Outdoor Living Quarters

■ By Anthony Brass

Dennis Marion was working in the wine industry in California for 20 years before starting as a distributor and manufacturer. He was looking for something new to represent. Marion recalls his interest in an extruded plastic, high-tensile wire fence an Alabama business had invented. Marion and his group became a dealer for this company and their new fencing. “It was an interesting safety fence,” says Marion. “We thought it was fascinating.” The group was officially in the horse industry.

Marion says the new fencing was installed on a ranch owned by a movie star in Santa Rosa who was running cattle, even though the fencing was designed more for polo ponies. The inventor of the fence played polo. He once saw horses get injured in a substandard fence, so he wanted to make a safer fence for horses and other animals. “These had to be engineered because of the turns, the corners, the stops,” Marion says. These types of advanced products in the equine industry is what attracted Marion. He understood the demand for high-end materials and containment structures that were reflecting the horse owners’ love of these animals.

They started getting more into animal barns. Soon, Marion was working with architects who were designing interiors. This is when he started going international; Europe was pushing out higher-end equine products and living spaces.

“I was starting to import stalls from Holland,” Marion adds the company they worked with was considered the finest manufacturer of horse containment in the world.

After importing from the Dutch company for a time, Marion and his company eventually broke away. They started developing their own products in the US. He discovered there wasn’t anybody manufacturing high-end stalls in America.

“We were the first ones to come out with a European-style stall in this country,” Marion says proudly. He adds horse owners overseas desire “frilly” quarters for their animals, and that this has been the case since the ’40s. Marion relished the opportunity to offer these refined spaces to clients in this continent.

The equine facility industry is traditional. Marion recalls their early clientele were Europeans only interested in buying



*The Alpine Stall Kit. Photo by Innovative Equine Systems*

European-made products; these customers included visitors from outside of that continent. Many were used to purchasing high-end products from England, Sweden and Germany.

The owner and president of Innovative Equine Systems says they had found a fascinating niche in the market. Americans were looking for much higher quality in their horse stalls without having to turn to Europe. “People were looking for an alternative to the ‘jail cell,’” Marion says there was a pent-up demand and a need to upgrade from the antiquated containment.

“All of sudden, people were very interested somebody was manufacturing quality products that they originally had to buy out of Europe.”

Marion says back then, before they improved the industry here, many in the US thought “high-end business” was panelized construction. Innovative Equine changed this mindset and standard in the US market, working with architects who started designing stalls to match houses. In addition, the company developed high-end interiors including safety and maintenance features.

Aesthetics and higher-end products weren’t the only reasons clients wanted European-style stalls; they wanted the open style for their horses, too.

“Horses are social animals; they like the open stalls. People were aware, even though they had large horses, they wanted to interact with other animals in their facility but also the people,” Marion says.



## Horse Talk

Innovative Equine Systems manufactures custom, classically designed stalls, partitions and doors for barn interiors, professional hardware and accessories such as finials, automatic horse waterers, rotating wash wands, bridle racks or door magnets, and specially made equine flooring. Post-frame structures are perfect for the company's components and accessories. "The pole barn really lends itself to this kind of industry," Marion says.

Their clients include those upgrading existing structures or stables. "We do a lot of remodels," Marion says. "I tell them I need photographs and I need a wish list." This initiates the conversation and starts the creative process. "If I'm starting with blueprints then I bid against the blueprints and a wish list."

He says they work on projects where the owners "don't exist."

"We've done work for very high-end facilities that are 'secret' and are 'coded,'" Marion says for these clandestine clients they'll fly in and will only meet with the contractor. They deal with several different scenarios and workers at a time. "I work with a different general contractor almost every day."

## Product Gnaw-ledge

Some horses have vices (chewing, cribbing) that are destructive to stall doors. These vices compromise the walls and doors, leaving gashes and holes. Innovative Equine Systems develops products that solve issues like this. Marion says these horses chew on softwood, so they came up with a solution: use hardwood lumber in stalls and all-steel construction. Hardwood is more difficult for horses to bite. "It's harder to eat hardwood than it is to eat softwood," Marion says. They import their own hardwood from managed forests in Borneo and Malaysia.

Horses are prone to developing respiratory diseases after living in stalls with excessive dust buildup on floors. The company designed a proprietary, recessed stall floor. These are waterproof, non-slip rubberized floors with drains that prevent unhealthy dust accumulation. "We've developed a concept that in the long run is better for the horses and for maintenance."

The company offers a quick-installation Alpine Stall Kit as a containment option for those on a budget. "It's simple for homeowners; it's almost a DIY," Marion says, "or it's for general contractors to use when looking for projects." This gives another avenue for many looking for alternatives when remodeling.

"We just finished a project for draft horses using this kit – this handles a large animal or groups of farm animals." He said this project in Utah included posts only on 5' centers, and that the kit worked well. These kits have a door, a gate, a couple of wings and are capable of enclosing openings of 5 to 18 feet.

## Project Plans

Most of their company's work is post-frame, and Marion says the majority of orders are for pole-barn facilities. He's keen on maintenance and cost issues on a project and understands clients' needs.

"A lot of people are really knowledgeable about what they want." He adds the conversation starts with them. "I'm not one

to tell them what to do. Sometimes we work on a budget issue, sometimes it's a preference. I'll jump in when needed and throw out some ideas."

The company is working on a high-end project in southern California that has multiple horse trainers on-site. Marion always listens to them, as they know the horses' needs. "Trainers are involved and have an opinion, and they have the ear of the owners." He says he spends a lot of time with the architect on these projects. They've been working on these high-end projects for the past 20 years. He adds sometimes an owner will have an architect to work and collaborate with. "I'll help consult or lead them if they've never done equine architecture."

Marion says some contractors are more attentive than others, but always finds the experience rewarding. "I enjoy working with general contractors all around the country."

Marion has others in his family who entered the world of equines first. He remembers his daughter starting out with a deep interest in horses before him. "My daughter was a three-day [equestrian] eventer. It was almost coincidental more than anything," he recalls, saying again he got into the industry because their venture was exploring such an interesting niche in the market. **FBN**



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# Ambassador Supply Acquires Astro Buildings

Company expands post-frame into family

■ By Anthony Brass

**A**mbassador Supply recently announced the purchase of Astro Buildings. The move marks the investment, management and holding company's third acquisition of a post-frame builder.

Astro Buildings creates residential and commercial barns and buildings, agricultural shops, garages, cabins and storage facilities. The Omaha-based company serves several states. They join Hixwood Metal, QSI (Quality Structures), Pioneer Truss, Trusco and others within the Ambassador family.

Ambassador said Astro has the reputation within the industry they want and that their process is proven.

"It's a great brand, with really great people," said Brad Crawford, Ambassador Supply CEO. "It [Astro] has been around, with a lot of really satisfied customers. We're looking to invest further and grow the brand."

The expansion is right for Ambassador for geographical reasons. Hixwood sits in Wisconsin to the north, QSI to the south in Kansas, and now Astro, the latest addition to their group, along the Iowa-Nebraska border.

"This starts to close that gap in a really good agricultural market for us," Crawford said.

Astro Buildings has a similar model as their now-sister company, QSI, which sits a couple hundred miles away. In 2019, Ambassador purchased QSI, their second post-frame acquisition. The proximity between the two allows a working collaboration.

"We'll have some operational synergies

between the two from an iron-sharpening, 'iron-type' of perspective," Crawford says.

They feel bringing on Astro aligns really well with QSI. "It's a direct consumer model, where we manage labor as well as provide material," Crawford said. He adds there will be a lot of opportunities to learn the best practices between the two companies, such as bulk-buying, as they are only four hours apart.

Ambassador believes in a diversified approach, bringing on several different companies.

"We're going for a balanced mix, between residential, commercial and post-frame or rural," Crawford said of their portfolio.

Ambassador Supply started in the industry a decade ago with a post-frame purchase in Ohio, so they know the importance of these companies. "We think post-frame is going to be around for a long time. You can build a lot of different types of products," Crawford said. "It allows a lot of flexibility in its offerings and it's low-cost."

Their company doesn't believe in a buy-flip strategy, and the Astro acquisition is no different.

"We're a buy-and-hold; we have a 100-year vision. We're looking to build off of Astro's legacy."

Ambassador is looking to continue to expand within the post-frame market.

"We are working with really good builders out there, to try to drive and provide value within the marketplace."

The integration of the acquisition will take three to six months to fully complete.

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# Lifting Trusses with CRANES

## A Manufacturer's Insight on Post-Frame Structural Member

■ By Anthony Brass

**L**ifting trusses into place comes with a unique set of challenges. The proper equipment remedies these challenges.

Hydraulic trucks, telehandlers, boom truck forklifts or cranes can all get the job done. If you are tasked with truss placement, you want the machine hoisting the truss to be as precise as possible. As contractors and builders, it helps to get the perspective from a crane expert, especially if you are operating one.

### Challenges Hoisting Trusses

When operating a self-erecting tower crane to lift a truss, selections of the height underhook – the distance from the ground to how high the building is going to be – is crucial.

“That’s going to vary because you need to leave about 25 ft. below the hook where you’re rigging, in the span of how long your truss is going to be, so it can pick it up safely and evenly and move it across the area of the jobsite,” says David Polce, regional business manager of Manitowoc-Potain tower crane products for the eastern and southern US.

He says crane operators need to consider the size of the truss or panel and the conditions outside. “You want to factor in the wind that is going to be pushing against that object you’re moving,” Polce cautions. He adds crane operators are always looking at the size and type of the truss, panel or wall for safety reasons.

Some pieces are determined as “fully dressed,” which is a solid object, or as “open,” where wind can pass through in between its parts.

“We measure the panel (or truss) size in meters squared, and look at how far it’s being moved across a certain area, which is the radius, and the width,” Polce says. “We then take that into consideration, and we have like a ‘tic-tac-toe’ (noughts and crosses) chart in our manuals that shows you at what wind speeds you can safely move that panel to where it needs to be.” He adds this practice — using load charts for crane-user safety recommendations — works as a guide for lifting both panels and trusses, and that it’s the biggest metric to look at.

Take measures to prevent trusses sailing away from a crane. “Everyone thinks it’s the weight that’s the biggest concern. When (the truss) starts sailing away from you, and it starts swinging or even trolleying, that, with the force of the wind, can take the crane and lift you off your foundation and tip over.” He cautions you don’t want the load taking control of the crane, instead of the crane controlling the load.

### Selecting Cranes & Operators

Smaller, self-erecting tower cranes are suitable equipment for post-frame construction. They maneuver well, are easy to operate, and have a suitable radius. Top-slewing cranes are more suitable for larger jobs with their ability to hoist heavier



*The IGO T85*

loads and distribute them to multi-story structures.

Polce says self-erecting tower cranes can handle longer, larger, heavier trusses. “Trusses can be very heavy, upwards of 70-80 ft. in some of these larger post-beam and post-frame construction projects now,” he says.

Experience matters when selecting crane operators. But first these individuals should be certified by the NCCCO (National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators). The NCCCO developed the Mobile Crane Operator certification program (CCO). These operators must complete required training, and then pass a written exam and practical timed course with the crane.

### Solving Truss Challenges with Cranes

Polce says using self-erecting tower cranes to hoist trusses completes these tasks faster, and they are more efficient. But the challenge, he says, is coordinating which builders get the crane and when. He says it’s important the general contractor factor in a self-erecting crane as part of the bidding process to take full advan-



tage, and reap cost and time savings, of using this type of equipment to manage the whole job. He can control who uses the crane, and when. In doing so, he can keep track of how the work is progressing.

Polce reiterates smaller cranes work on post-frame projects. Many jobsites require working in tighter spaces with limited room for truss-lifting machinery. "That's the benefit of using the tinier cranes; you can put these in tight places." Polce adds operators can put these cranes into those smaller spaces and reach the backside of the where trusses need to be placed.

Compact cranes makes them ideal for framing homes in residential neighborhoods or in remote areas with limited yard space. "The benefit is that these stand right beside the building and [hoist and jib] goes up and over instead of a mobile hydraulic boom truck or where it has to "square it out" and reach at an angle."

Examples of the specs on some of these versatile, smaller self-erecting tower cranes include: 54 ft. in total length; a jib length at 89-94 ft.; a height underhook of 67 ft. with 30 min. to set up; another crane includes a 73-ft. height underhook, 92 ft. of jib; and others at 45 ft. long when folded; or other cranes with a maximum height of 98 ft.

These "mini-cranes" can complete truss lifting and placement for two side-by-side houses at the same time without moving. Multiple configurations on the cranes give the operator more lifting options to place trusses of varying sizes and weights into place. In addition, these are "taxi cranes," Polce calls them, that can lift A/C units as easily as larger trusses, performing three to four jobs a day completing homes or apartment complexes.

Some larger post-frame home projects take longer to build. Polce says it's more cost-efficient to use a small self-erecting tower crane to lift trusses, as these can just stay on-site. Other lifting equipment must be driven back and forth from the jobsite over the period of days or weeks for longer post-frame builds, which increases costs. "Some of these log homes out West in Montana and Colorado are bigger and take longer."

Placing these cranes in the correct spot on-site affects truss completion times.

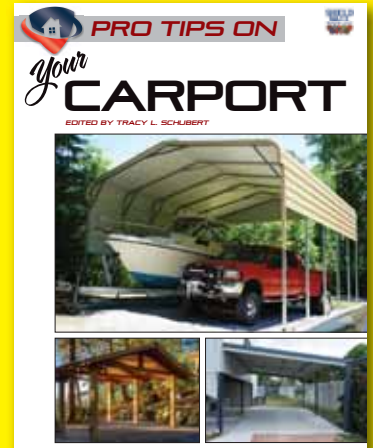
Once these are positioned in place to maximize their reach, they don't have to be moved to another spot to hoist and set the next piece. "If you look at the job from the beginning and study the placement of where the crane will be, and hit all areas of the jobsite, you will make your job more efficient the whole day," he says.

Polce says using cranes to hoist trusses make your jobsite safer. Many use telehandlers to place trusses in pole barn frames with workers helping on scaffolding. "These buildings are 80' to 100' and they put them up very rapidly," Polce says, adding this kind of combination is not the safest when lifting trusses into place. "You're putting in one truss after another. I've talked to many pole barn builders and the disadvantage they say is that they're not very high up, usually one story." He adds they're then driving that telehandler down 80-100 ft., and there may be no integrated counterweight to distribute weight evenly for balance. This safety feature is designed and built into many small, self-contained or self-erecting cranes with these movements while hoisting in mind. The telehandler is moved often to reach another area where the next truss goes in. The smaller cranes have greater reach and don't have to be moved, so the hazard of moving machinery around several times is eliminated.

Polce says the crane becomes the centerpiece of a post-frame job and a contractor can eliminate the use of several telehandlers or other heavy-lifting tools. "The crane 'runs' your jobsite for you." These may be controlled remotely too for even more convenience. The operator on top of the building is free to move, setting the trusses in and putting loads down. The crane can place in other materials before the trusses are ready, staying steps ahead to increase efficiency and finish a post-frame structure faster.

## Conclusion

Using self-erecting tower cranes in post-frame construction is a viable option for lifting trusses safely and accurately. Compact machines are available that can provide maneuverability and enough lifting capacity to place these framework components efficiently. **FBN**



# SEAL DEALS

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## Top Ten Metal Carport Myths Dispelled

by Scott Kyles, Carport and Metal Buildings Content Specialist, Citibrix



In his work as a content marketing specialist at Citibrix, Scott partners with major metal building providers like Carport Central to educate consumers about the benefits of modern metal structures.



### 1. Metal Carports Attract Lightning.

While it's true that metal is a natural conductor, a metal structure doesn't attract lightning any more than a wood-framed structure does. And in the event lightning does strike your metal carport, you're actually better protected than you may realize. When lightning strikes, it provides a path to the earth, meaning that the impact of a lightning strike is diffused through the metal and dissipated directly to the ground. If you ever live in a lightning storm, discharging conductors in a metal carport is actually a safer choice!

### 2. Metal Carports Aren't Attractive.

When you install a modern metal carport that fits the design "flavor" of your home, you can create a clean, open, unobstructed space that's completely customizable. The contrast of

a metal carport is customizable too, including choosing your color, roof color, trim color, optional side panels, gables, doors, windows and more.

Like any type of building, you can make your metal carport look like a traditional building. Check out a traditional Carport Central 10' Building Design Set. Many builders also maintain color-coded paint systems. They're easy to use and an accessible line of complete color coordination. The only real limit is the look of your metal carport to your imagination.

### 3. Metal Carports Interfere with Cell Phones and Wi-Fi Signals.

This simply isn't the case. Metal buildings don't block

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**Pro Tips On: Your Carport** is an invaluable resource to help consumers make informed choices about what they need and communicate those needs to their builder. This 144-page, must-have book helps teach consumers what they need to understand to build the protective carport of their dreams.

# Construction Business Climate

Shield Wall Media recently closed its mid-year Construction Business Climate Survey. Despite all the doom and gloom we hear from news outlets, the results are surprisingly good.

We divided respondents into three categories: Building Contractors, Roofing Contractors, and Building Material Dealers or Manufacturers.

We believe you'll find the results to be of interest.

## HOW DOES YOUR YEAR OVER YEAR GROSS SALES, INCLUDING BACKLOG (Q1) COMPARE TO 2021?

**67%** of Building Contractors report results that are up compared to Q1 2021.

67% of respondents are up across all business types.

## HOW DOES YOUR OVERALL Q1 PROFITABILITY COMPARE TO 2021?

**86%** of Building Contractors report profitability to be the same or better when compared to Q1 2021.

86% across all business types report profitability to be the same or better. (2021 was a record year for many!)

## HOW DOES YOUR UNITS SOLD YEAR OVER YEAR, INCLUDING BACKLOG (Q1) COMPARE TO 2021?

**76%** of Building Contractors report unit sales being the same or better than Q1 of last year.

76% are the same or better across all business types, while 24% are down slightly across all business types.

## HOW WILL YOUR OVERALL PROFITABILITY IN Q2 COMPARE TO 2021? (BEST GUESS)

**90%** of Building Contractors estimate profitability will be the same or better.

90% of respondents (across all categories) are the same or more profitable than they were in Q2 2021.

## HOW WILL YOUR Q2 YEAR OVER YEAR GROSS SALES, INCLUDING BACKLOG, COMPARE TO 2021? (BEST GUESS)

**90%** of Building Contractors estimate Q2 sales will be the same or better than 2021.

81% across all sectors report gross sales will be the same or better.

## WHAT CHALLENGE IS EXERTING THE GREATEST IMPACT ON YOUR BUSINESS?

**#1** Challenge: Shortage of workers is the #1 challenge for Building Contractors and Dealers/Distributors/Manufacturers.

The #1 challenge for Roofing Contractors: It was a tie between material shortages and material costs.

## 2022 GENERAL OUTLOOK

**57%** of Building Contractors estimate 2022 will close better than 2021.

57% of respondents across all categories believe 2022 will be better than 2021.

**+** Comparing the numbers for Q1, Q2 and 2022 as a whole (best guess) sentiment drops slightly for Q2 and slightly more for the year as a whole.

Sentiment seems to be declining, but it is still generally positive.



# From their perspective ...

We asked suppliers and manufacturers about their take on the current construction business climate. Here's what a few of them had to say:

“Supply issues have plagued the residential roofing market across the board recently – regardless of roofing type. Many MRA members have experienced some delay in material supply but are reporting these issues are typically short-lived.”

**Renee Ramey, Executive Director  
Metal Roofing Alliance**

“Finding and retaining employees is key to success in any climate, especially now. We here at Levi's Building Components believe company culture matters, and it is proving to be a valuable part of our formula for success. We are living our core values of Integrity, Quality, Service, Collaboration, and Growth. To our employees and customers, it's known as the Levi's Experience.”

**Mike O'Hara, National Sales Manager  
Levi's Building Components**

“S-5! distributor orders are up significantly over 2021. However, shipments are flat due to backlogs caused by supply chain issues and raw material availability. Our advantage is our distribution model. S-5! products are on shelves nationwide—always. Labor shortage is rarely a problem. We have a reputation in the industry for doing things The Right Way™. We are a privately held company with a comfortable working environment, and values that attract great talent and retention.”

**Rob Haddock, Founder and CEO  
S-5!**

“What a year so far! The word which comes to mind is “Adaption.” While supply chain and upward cost pressures continue, we as an industry have learned to adapt. This has served us well and will continue to serve us as we move forward. It is a testament to the quality people in our industry. Generally I am seeing business remain strong. Some slow down may be occurring but this can be expected after the unprecedented past couple of years. What we may see as a slow down can to some degree be attributed to a normalization of an unsustainable growth pattern. I remain very positive about the metal roofing and post-frame building industry where I live.”

**Randy L. Chaffee  
Source One Marketing, LLC**

“Crew workers are still hard to find. Increased payroll expenses due to increased poaching a very limited labor pool are driving building prices up to dangerous levels. The balancing act of price, profit, and pay scale is extremely challenging. The bright side is that demand remains steady in our markets.”

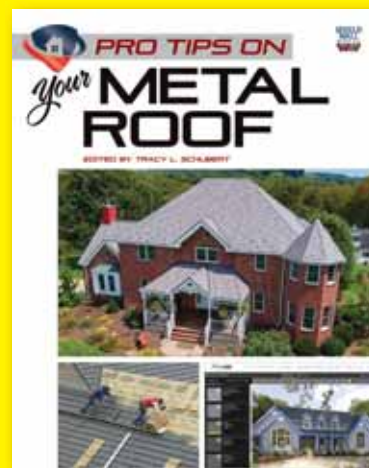
**Matt Greiner, Owner/COO  
Greiner Buildings**

“Business is very strong – momentum from 2021 has continued into the first six months of 2022. I expect the balance of the year to remain at the same pace. Good news for the industry: There are new post-frame builders entering into the market to service and support increased demand for post-frame constructed buildings. These new builders are looking for innovative products and services to provide a competitive advantage to build their respective businesses. In addition, consumers new to the post-frame industry are also driving new innovative designs and services in order to meet their individual needs. As an innovative leader, our ICC-ESR certified Perma-Column foundation solution that supports builder and consumer needs. These are very exciting times for our industry...I'm looking forward to the journey.”

**Mark Stover, President  
Perma-Column LLC**

“The climate of the Construction Industry has seen unprecedented growth despite the supply issues that dealers, distributors, and manufacturers have had to overcome. The import supply chain has been greatly affected by the rising costs of containers, delays in deliveries and even partial shipments, which has left the domestic manufacturers to fill the needs of the increased growth despite dealing with the rising costs of raw materials, transportation, and labor during this unique period. The consensus in many sectors is: How long can we sustain this unparalleled growth before the shortages in the supply chain impact the Construction Industry as a whole?”

**Mike Green  
Western Canadian Sales Manager  
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### Metal Substrate Options

by Todd Miller, President Isiah Industries



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# Work Smarter, Not Harder

New Tools & Building System Help Offset Labor Shortage

■ By Karen Knapstein

**T**he inability to fill work crews is a serious problem for builders with backlogs to work through. There are glimmers of hope that more young people will enter the skilled trades. Here and there, high schools are once again adding industrial arts classes to the curriculum. But that's no help in the present.

To help offset today's labor shortages, some in the industry are developing tools and systems to reduce or eliminate some of the physical labor necessary in construction, or reduce the number of people needed to complete specific tasks.

One such system meant to reduce the amount of labor necessary for putting up a post-frame building is the Rapid Framing System. Co-invented by Dwayne Borkholder and Todd Meinhold, the Rapid Framing System was introduced at the 2022 Frame Building Expo. Working together, the duo has developed a system they believe may revolutionize the post-frame industry.

"We'd just received our provisional patent, so we felt good about going public with it at Frame Building Expo," says Borkholder. "We felt very honored at the show because there were a lot of people congregating around the booth. We felt we had a lot of good, positive feedback. We had good feedback from all three customer categories: builders themselves, manufacturers, and some corporate like Simpson's Strong-Tie and Mitek."

In essence, Borkholder says, the Rapid Framing System introduces prefab wall systems into the post-frame industry. In traditional post-frame, each step of the construction process can involve several separate tasks, with each task requiring multiple people. "Erecting a building has



*The Rapid Framing System was introduced at the 2022 Frame Building Expo in Nashville. Notice the framing members are connected with metal plates, which give the structure additional rigidity.*  
PHOTO BY KAREN KNAPSTEIN

a whole series of tasks just to get the walls up and braced and plumb," he explains. For example, setting and making sure the posts are plumb, marking out and putting girts on posts, post bracing, and leveling are each separate tasks that require more than one person. The Rapid Framing System eliminates some of the tasks altogether, and most of the tasks that remain require fewer people.

In a nutshell, this new system involves setting posts and then attaching pre-fabricated, framed wall sections to those posts. Posts need only be set at the corners and

where wall panels meet. Once the posts are set, it only takes three workers to install the prefabricated wall sections: one on the skid steer setting the panels in place, and two on the ground to fasten them. "Once you hang all four sides, the building is going to be square, it's going to be braced, and it's going to be framed completely," explains Borkholder. "It's revolutionary. It's stronger and faster."

Wall panels are built off-site using truss plate connectors, which give the panels additional rigidity. Window and door openings are framed into the prefabricat-





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*The Badger post-hole cleaner eliminates the need for a skilled worker to spend time cleaning loose soil from the post hole. Anyone who can operate a skid-steer can do the job without breaking a sweat.*

PHOTO COURTESY TODD MEINHOLD.

ed wall sections as they are manufactured off-site. Headers are also already incorporated into the wall panels so once the panels are fastened in place at the jobsite, setting trusses can begin.

Meinhold has been testing the Rapid Framing System at H&D Quality Builders. "Todd is integrating the field part of it and giving feedback," Borkholder says. He's been documenting builds with the new system with videos and time studies to determine how much time and labor is saved. What he has found is they've been able to take a man off the framing crew, which is the equivalent of a 25% savings in framing labor. Three workers can do the same job on the jobsite as it would take four or even five workers with the traditional post-frame building method.

Another labor-saver is the Badger. Invented by Todd Meinhold, the Badger is a hole cleaning tool that takes a lot of the tedious and time-consuming handwork out of the post-setting process. "To really get good soil compaction for the foundation, whether you're using a precast concrete donut for a smaller building or pouring concrete into the hole, the best way to ensure there's solid compaction at the bottom of the hole is to clean out the loose dirt that an auger doesn't scoop up," says Meinhold. Conversely, in muddy conditions, the mud doesn't want to come out of the auger. Or it leaves a bunch of loose mud at the bottom. "The loose dirt will dry out and also compact over time by compressing the air out of the soil...which will in-turn cause potential settling."

In addition to assuring the post has a solid foundation, the hole cleaning tool also takes a lot of physical labor out of digging post holes, which helps when it

comes to finding someone to do that particular task. Meinhold explains: "We're losing young workers; it used to be when a new person came in, their job was to clean the hole." But there aren't as many young workers coming into the trade anymore. "When you lose that [young] labor force, you need to figure out how to extend the working life of a worker, but keep up the productivity."

Taking the physicality out of the job was the answer. "We went from a three-man crew digging and cleaning holes to one 75-year-old guy — working part time — digging and cleaning holes."

Meinhold is developing more labor-saving tools. He says, "Everybody can be creative and inventive to figure out ways to work around the shortage or situations they have when it's their own business." Which leads one to wonder: What other tools are being developed to help remedy the pains caused by labor shortages? **FBN**

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*In this article, originally published in the January 2002 edition of Frame Building News explains that customers are willing to pay more for services and products that have little to no risk involved.*



# How Can I Sell When My Price Isn't Lowest?

■ By Dave Kahle

**I**wish I had a dollar for every time I was asked that question in a sales training session. It's certainly one of the most common questions I hear coming from professional salespeople — and their bosses.

There are a variety of answers — too many for just one column. But, we can identify one of the most powerful ways to deal with this problem. First, let's start with this premise: "Low price" is not the main reason people buy!

In every survey of buying motivations I've ever read, low price is never the primary motivation. Yes, it's important. And, when everything else is equal, it will be the deciding factor. But very rarely is everything else equal. And very few people in this world buy only on the basis of low price.

How many of you are driving used Yugos? Or wearing a suit you bought at a garage sale? Or watching an 8-inch black & white TV? You've got the picture. You don't always buy on the basis of low price, so why should you think that all your customers do?

The truth is, they don't. And here's a secret that almost nobody knows, including all those gurus telling you to sell value. They don't always buy the best value. But, they can invariably be counted on to buy the lowest risk! The biggest issue in the minds of your customers and prospects is not price, and it's not value — it is risk.

What's risk? It is the potential cost to the individual customer if he/she makes a mistake. It's not just the money, although that is part of it. It is also the social, psychological, and emotional cost that your customer will pay if your choice isn't the best one. The lower the risk of the

decision, the more likely your customer will say "yes" to you — regardless of the price.

Let's become comfortable with this concept of risk first, and then discuss how to use it in your sales efforts. In order to really understand risk, you must first see this issue from your customers' perspective.

Try to put yourself in their shoes, and calculate the amount of risk that you expect your customers to take when you offer them an opportunity to say "yes" to you.

Here's an illustration to help you understand this concept. Imagine that you are under orders by your spouse to pick up a package of disposable cups on the way home from work today because you're having friends over for a casual evening of dessert and drinks tonight. You stop at the local grocery store and make a selection between brand A and brand B. You pick brand A.

After you bring the cups home, your spouse mixes up a pitcher of margaritas and pours one. The drink leaks out of the bottom of the cup and puddles on the counter. There is a hole in the bottom of the cup. You pour your drink into another cup and it leaks, too. In fact, every one of the cups you bought is defective. What happens to you in this instant in time? What is the consequence of your decision? I don't know about you, but I would be the recipient of some negative emotion. My spouse would be upset with me. That may be the most painful cost of your decision.

But there are other costs. You're going to have to fix the problem. If there's time, you'll have to run back to the store and replace the cups. So, in addition to the emotional cost, you must also pay in terms of extra time and additional money. All

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because of your bad decision. Those costs — negative emotions, time wasted, extra money spent — all combine to form the risk you accepted when you made your decision.

Here's a simple exercise to help you understand this concept. Draw a short vertical line. At the top of the line write the number 25. At the bottom, write the number zero. Now on a scale of 0-25, where would you put the risk of buying a package of disposable cups? You'd probably say it is close to zero. So, put an X on the line from 0 to 25 where you think the risk of buying those cups would be.

Let's look at an illustration at the other end of the scale. I once had an adoption agency as a client. When a young lady is in a crisis pregnancy, and she's making a decision as to whether or not to release her unborn child for adoption, how big a risk is that for her? Put your X on the line that represents your assessment of that risk. Most people put their mark around 25. The risk in this situation is a lifetime of consequences for at least four people — the mother, the child, and the adoptive parents. That's a very high risk.

Compare the Xs for the two different decisions, and you'll conclude that different decisions carry with them differing degrees of risk.

Now, let's apply this concept to your customers. Remember that every time you ask your prospects to say yes to you, they are accepting some risk. And each of those decisions you ask of them carries with it a different degree of risk.

Imagine your typical customer. Then think of the typical offer or decision you ask of that person. For example, take one of your newer products. Imagine you are presenting it to your customer for the first time. Now, put yourself in his shoes, and see the situation through his eyes.

On the 0-25 scale, how much risk does your customer accept when he says "yes" to you? For an easy way of calculating it, just ask yourself what happens to that individual if you, or your company, messes up. If your customer buys that product

and it doesn't do what you claim it will, what trouble will that make for your customer? What consequences will he/she pay? What is the risk? And don't say that there is no risk because you'll take care of any problem that might develop. You may think that, but your customer doesn't know that. And remember, you're trying to see this from your customer's point of view, not yours. The amount of risk is what your customer perceives it to be.

I had a great example of the role of risk in sales several years ago. A young man approached me to help his company with their sales efforts. They were selling a product that was, at the time, a real state-of-the-art breakthrough. The company designed computerized controls that were retrofitted on production equipment. As a result of the use of these controls, the sav-

ings in energy consumption would pay for the cost of the equipment in less than a year. It looked like a great product. But he couldn't sell them as rapidly as the company wanted.

"Tell me how you go about selling them," I asked.

"We qualify our prospects to the point where we know we have someone who could use the equipment," he replied "Then I call the production engineer or the plant manager on the phone, and gather some information about the type of equipment they use. Then I create a written proposal showing the economic payback, and mail it to him. Next I call and try to close the sale."

"Let me see if I understand correctly," I said. "You're calling a plant manager on the phone. I would guess that most plant

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managers are men in their 50s, probably with advanced degrees, and who have been in the plant for a number of years, is that right?"

"That's right."

"OK," I said. "So, you're calling someone twice your age, asking him to spend \$20,000 to \$30,000 on equipment he's never seen, from a company he's never heard of, and from a sales person half his age who he's never met. Is that right?"

My client became a little defensive. "If you put it that way, I suppose it's right."

"Well put it that way," I replied, "because that's the way he sees it." The problem was simple — risk. On that scale of 0-25, how much risk would you think the plant manager would be accepting if he said "Yes" to the over-the-phone offer? Put yourself in his shoes. Suppose the equipment didn't work the way it was supposed to? He could shut down production lines, spend weeks

trying to make things right, cause all sorts of havoc in the plant, and potentially even lose his job. Now that's risk.

If you were that plant manager, how much more than the original \$20,000 quote would you spend to reduce the risk? It wouldn't be hard to justify a price double that. That should give you a clue as to how to fight the "low price" issue. Worry less about low price and more about lowering the risk.

Here are four strategies to do so.

1. Build solid, deep relationships with the key decision-makers. Relationships mitigate risk. The greater the relationship, the lower the perceived risk. That's why the salesman with the longer relationship almost always has the benefit of the doubt in a competitive situation. It's not the price — it's the risk.

2. Make ample use of third party recommendations, customer lists, case

studies, and testimonials. All of these say to the customer that someone else, or lots of someone else's, have used the product or service. That means it's less risk for your customer to buy it.

3. Try to get your customer as physically involved with the product as possible. For example, if you're selling a piece of equipment, try to get the customer to trial the equipment, or at least visit somewhere it's being used. The more your customer can see and feel the actual thing, the less risk it is to them.

4. Finally, work with your company to create offers that reduce the risk. Trial periods, money-back guarantees, delayed billing, warranties, service desks — all of these reduce your customer's perception of risk. The winners in the competitive selling arena of the Information Age are those who are the low risk providers, not the low price people. **FBN**

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# Post-frame Home

Sikeston, Missouri

The owners of this modern residence proves that any style on the outside, or interiors on the inside, work seamlessly in post-frame construction. The porch entrance begins with classic, inviting wooden posts. A quick transition follows, as you walk through the utilitarian-themed doorway and entrance surrounded by pleasant, light-colored

wainscotting. This stone look doesn't stop here, as it continues on into the house.

Dark Patrician Bronze ribbed metal siding with black trim complements the clean lines of the windows that give a Frank Lloyd Wright vibe.

The sophisticated look of the pre-cut black soffit completes the appealing look of this home for these "Show-Me State" residents. **FBN**

## PROJECT DETAILS

**BUILDER:** Stockade Buildings

**LOCATION:** Sikeston, Missouri

**PROJECT & SIZE:** Residence, 40' x 60', single-slope roof, 1 1/2/12

**PRIMARY SUPPLIER:** Stockade Buildings

**ROOF PANELS:** Multi-rib, Kynar 500-painted 26-gauge steel, McElroy Metal

**SIDING AND TRIM:** Siding, Black, multi-rib; wall steel panels, multi-rib, Patrician Bronze; soffit, Matrix steel pre-cut, McElroy Metal; wainscotting trim, mortarless panel, Versetta Stone

**FRAMING:** Flush-frame (w/post-frame) integrated system with plywood backer for horizontal panel

**TRUSSES:** Single Slope parallel chord 42' with 12" overhangs

**OVERHEAD DOORS:** Clopay

**INSULATION:** Closed-cell insulation, blown-in

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***This stable is outfitted with a mechanical ventilation system. Note the powered louvered inlet, roll-up doors on all sides, and grilled stalls, all of which help with air exchange, as well as air movement throughout the building.***

*PHOTO COURTESY OF WICK BUILDINGS.*

# Clear the Air

## Proper Ventilation Is Essential For Equine Health

■ By Karen Knapstein

**G**ood air quality inside horse stables is important for not only maintaining the building, but also maintaining animal health. Damp air can damage framing and building components. Damage-causing condensation can drip down onto horses, feed and tack. Also, animal confines with inadequate air exchange promote the viability of disease-causing pathogens like bacterium, viruses and other microorganisms.

Horses create a lot of waste and moisture. Each day, the average horse produces about 50 pounds of manure and puts two gallons of moisture into the air. Since horses are herd animals and don't do well by themselves, seldom does a horse-owner only have one horse. So, with each added horse, add another two gallons of humidity and 50 pounds of manure. Add in sweat and urine, plus moisture added during bathing and facility cleaning, and it's easy to see why an improperly ventilated horse barn and the

animals that live within may suffer. (Granted, stalls should be kept clean, but the horses' "contributions" are a major factor in making adequate air exchange a necessity.)

A ventilation system isn't a one-size-fits-all proposition. The amount of air exchange needed depends on how many animals will be housed and other factors, but a general rule is there should be six to eight air changes per hour. According to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, in winter, a ventilation rate of 25-40 cubic



feet per minute (cfm) per horse housed is ideal. In summer, ventilation rates as high as 300 cfm per horse are needed to keep air temperatures from rising within the barn.

### Balance is Essential

While volumes may differ from building to building, the intake and exhaust in any building should be balanced. That is, the amount of air entering the building through the ventilation system and the amount of air exiting should be equal.

"Achieving the ideal intake and exhaust balance is crucial to a horse's health," explains Shannon Clark, Marketing Coordinator, MWI Components. "In fact, you could be causing serious health issues if the ventilation system is not properly balanced. A barn that is poorly ventilated will trap dust, dirt and other impurities in the building."

To equally distribute fresh air along both sides of the stall barn, eave vents should run along the entire length of the sidewall. It's imperative that the net free area (NFA) of the exhaust matches the NFA of the inlets. For example, if the ventilation system is comprised of eave vents and a ridge vent, the sum of the NFA of both eave vents should equal the NFA of the ridge vent. "The greatest flow per unit area of total opening is obtained by using inlet and outlet openings of nearly equal areas," says Alicia Cahill, MWT's Customer Service Manager. "If there is a difference in size, the lower opening should be slightly larger."

The two types of ventilation systems used in post-frame construction are natural (aka passive) ventilation and mechanical ventilation.

### Natural Ventilation

A natural ventilation system powered by temperature differences between the inside and outside air and local wind. As warm, moist air rises inside the building (convection) and exits through the ridge vent, it creates a negative pressure that draws cooler air with lower humidity in through the vents at the eaves. Wind hitting the roof can also help the venting process by creating low pressure (aspiration), which further draws out the warm air through the ridge vent and functioning cupolas. Selecting a building location that takes advantage of breezes will also help with the ventilation process.

If the ridge vent runs along the entire length of the roof, it will allow the maximum amount of contaminated air to escape. Incorporate a vented closure at the ridge to prevent dirt, debris, and wind-driven rain from finding its way into the stable at the ridge. Open-celled foam closures at the eaves will allow air to flow into the building while keeping out dirt, debris, and pests.

#### DID YOU KNOW:

Under wet conditions, *Dermatophilus congolensis* bacterium, which lives on horses' skin, can cause an inflammatory skin infection known as rain rot or rain scald.


There is limited control in natural ventilation systems; the exchange of fresh air for foul is at the mercy of the elements. But during warm weather, opening doors and windows at opposite ends of the building will help move air through the stable; install windows and doors that will perform without failing.

"Two openings on opposite sides of a space will tend to increase the ventilation flow; this is why Bale or Dutch Doors should be considered as an inlet," says Clark. "These allow through ventilation into a building and provide circulation in and out of enclosed stalls."

"Opening a door on each end of the alley may not be enough, though," adds Cahill. "Systems using natural ventilation should be designed for effective ventilation regardless of wind direction. There must be adequate ventilation when the wind does not come from the prevailing direction. This is also where a multi-purpose option, such as a Dutch Door, is desirable as it allows greater flexibility when bringing fresh air into the space and gives greater flexibility to what level or direction it is introduced."

During cold weather, windows and doors are kept closed to keep cold drafts off the horses. When it's cold outside, the main goal of the ventilation system is to control odor, moisture, and ammonia buildup. Vents running along the length of

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the sidewalls provide a continuous supply of fresh air that allows the contaminated, moist air to escape through the ridge vent ... that is, if the moisture makes it to the ridge.

### Condensation

When warm, moist air rises, if conditions are favorable, the moisture condenses on the underside of an uninsulated metal roof. When there's so much condensation that the surface tension can no longer hold it, droplets of water fall on whatever lies below. To prevent "rain" from falling inside an uninsulated barn, a condensation control system such as DripStop, applied on the underside of the roof panels, will hold the moisture until it can evaporate back into the air.

### Mechanical Ventilation System

There are some cases where a natural ventilation system may not be enough to meet the fresh-air needs. For example, if





*Large roll-up doors on both ends, eave and ridge vents are all part of the passive ventilation system in this horse barn. Stall fans and grilled stalls also help facilitate the distribution of fresh air. PHOTOS COURTESY OF WICK BUILDINGS.*




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the building is expected to have excessive moisture, a mechanical ventilation system would be a better choice. Even with a drain, bathing horses in a wash stall adds a lot of moisture to the environment. Water will be absorbed into the concrete, which is porous, to later end up in the air.

If the building has a new concrete floor, moisture is released into the air throughout the curing process. Depending on humidity levels and temperature, the curing process can take up to two months of drying time per inch of concrete pad.

When considering the overall design of the project, mechanical ventilation systems require the building to be well sealed. Insulation will prevent condensation and will keep the building cooler during the summer and warmer during the winter. Properly designed and operating mechanically ventilated stables have a slight negative pressure, which draws in fresh air through the inlets. The system

may include powered fans mounted in a gable wall with opening and closing shutters on the opposite wall or under a covered vent in the roof. If a thermostat or hygostat (which monitors humidity levels) are incorporated, they can turn on the system when needed. Power-vented cupolas are another option. Electric fans, triggered by temperature or humidity, can be mounted in the cupolas to mechanically exhaust as needed.

Barns with mechanical ventilation systems can be kept closed during the summer; running exhaust fans and inlets will keep the temperature from rising. Evenly distributed air inlets help with fresh air circulation and help with keeping the horses healthy and comfortable.

### Distribution

Fans can also be used to evenly distribute fresh air throughout the building. They can be mounted on or above stalls to keep the

horses cool and keep flies at bay. Additionally, fans can be mounted high on walls, or large, industrial-type fans can be mounted on the ceiling or on the bottom chord of a truss to continually distribute fresh air.

Grills in stall walls and doors can also play a role in animal comfort. "Grills will naturally enhance air circulation in a horse barn," explains Clark. "But this will not be a 'quick fix' for misguided ventilation systems. Circulation of clean air — generated by an exceptional building ventilation system — through stall grills is the target to aim for."

### Conclusion

To maintain optimum air quality, a stall barn must have a ventilation system that will eliminate excess moisture, heat, odors, and ammonia and provide horses with fresh, clean air. Work out ventilation system specifics during the planning stage of your builds so your customer can give their horses the healthy home they deserve. **FBN**



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## SHOW SUPPORTERS



# Horse Barn *Trends*

For the Comfort & Delight of  
Equines & Their Humans

■ By Linda Schmid

**T**rends may come and go, but when the trend means greater function, you wonder if it may become the norm. That is the case with the new horse barns that so often incorporate space for people as well as horses. They are multi-purpose projects, says Tim Noble, who builds horse barns in Kentucky, the “Horse Capital of the World.”

Dennis Marion of Innovative Equine Systems sees a change in the horse barns people are building, too. “In some cases, these changes have involved looking for more modest designs for either primary equine centers or secondary facilities for overflow,” Marion said. This is because the cost of building, like everything else, is up.

However, there is a surge in barns that are created for both people and horses. Noble said, “You might find that a customer wants a facility that is part horse barn, part garage, part party barn. Horse people like to be near their horses, so many request living space or lounge/party rooms in the barn. Some owners want a kitchen so the ladies can invite their friends, sit and have coffee, and then take their horses out.”

As far as size, 36' x 38' to 60' x 72' are common. Tom Wondra, Chief Financial Officer of Walter Buildings sees bigger barns trending, with stalls that are 12' x 12' and 10-16 per building. Buildings range from 36'-40' x 96' and often feature



steel panel roofing, he said.

Stained southern yellow pine is very trendy for interiors according to Noble. Wondra agrees. He states that the walls and dividers will often be stained pine in combination with white or steel liner panels and ceiling panels which brighten the interior considerably. Stalls are pine with powder-coated metal accents.

“The purpose of the space dictates the material,” according to Shannon Clark, MWI Marketing Coordinator. “If you’re looking at tack room cladding, the options are nearly endless. But what you will often notice is a rustic-chic look to these decorative spaces. Additionally, because tack rooms display and store expensive items, easy to dust (and/or wipe) cladding is becoming more popular. This helps in keeping an aesthetic, polished appearance.”

Alicia Cahill, MWI Customer Service Manager, said, “Unlike tack rooms, wash bays are more utilitarian in nature, as they are a designated space to clean (and to



*(ABOVE) MWI Dutch Doors are used as stall windows.*

PHOTO CREDIT LESTER BUILDING SYSTEMS, LLC

*(LEFT) Innovative Equine Systems' new Alpine Stall Kits.*

be kept clean). PVC interior wall panels are often utilized for this application, as they can be washed down and rinsed after your animal leaves the space. They're lightweight, relatively inexpensive, and come in large sheets, which can be attached to stall walls for almost seamless protection.”

Wash bays with hot and cold running water, steel or PVC liners, and good lighting are all in demand.

Marion sees keen interest in European style stabling, so Innovative Equine Systems has developed versatile Alpine Stall kits for contractors to easily provide these interiors, including stalls and partitions as well as Dutch doors and shutters. These heavy-duty design elements deliver the look of sophisticated European high-end facilities that is so popular.

“We recently added the horse play resistant MWI Vault Latch® with a secure retention system to our equestrian offering, Clark said. “Sometimes, horses





opened for fresh air or closed to keep the elements out,” said Clark.

“The bale door is commonly paired with a window grill — another trending horse barn product. This can be either hinged or fixed to protect the door and the animal,” Cahill continued. “Both the Dutch door or bale door can be produced with a cross-buck or window option to provide either complete enclosure or a vista when in the closed position.”

Some horse barns feature windows; many owners opt for double hung windows for ventilation with hinged grates for easy cleaning. Wondra sees them flying off the shelves.

People are very cognizant of the comfort of their horses and it is easy for a horse to get hurt, for instance they will bang their hoof if anything obtrudes into their path. Noble sees that many people look for everything they place in the stall to have rounded corners.

With comfort in mind, rubber pavers bordered with concrete to hold them in place are often the flooring of choice. Rubber is better for shod horses, but many like concrete because it is easier to clean. The solution for some is to have stamped concrete that looks like plank floors, while others have plain broomed concrete installed, then they place rubber

are just too smart for their own good, so the latch sits nearly concealed at the top of the stall. You just pull down on the first grill bar to unhinge the latch — easy for the owners, but not for the horses!”

Sliding doors for stalls are another prevailing choice according to Wondra and Noble, while Dutch doors are in demand according to Marion.

Dutch doors can have other uses besides their traditional use. According to Clark, “If you’re looking for a popular window option, your best place to look may not even have the word ‘window’ in the name. Bale and Dutch doors both provide a functional window in the back or side of a stall.”

“Dutch doors provide the opportunity to open the top only for a window or the entire door for a run-out. They are normally ordered with a safety gate to keep leaners from damaging the doors or themselves,” Cahill added.

“Those who aren’t looking for a whole door tend to like the bale doors (approximately half the size of a Dutch door). Like the Dutch door, they can be



**MWI Components’ Arcadian Sliding Doors, Dutch Doors, Weathervanes, and Horse Stalls.**  
PHOTO CREDIT LESTER BUILDING SYSTEMS, LLC

mats over them for the comfort and wellbeing of their horses.

Continuing the safety and comfort considerations, lighting is usually LED; like high, round hanging lights that are out of reach in the bays or tube lighting, completely enclosed for safety. LED is



**MWI Components’ Vault Latch.**  
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better than other lighting because if the temperature is not steady in the barn, you flip on the light, and it warms up fast, then the light can blow up.

To keep the temperature steady, Noble sees foam insulation going into the walls.

Clark sees a switch from traditional insulation to foil insulation. “With regards to clean air, foil insulation doesn’t release harmful fibers or dust, thus eliminating skin or airway irritations and providing cleaner air,” Clark said.

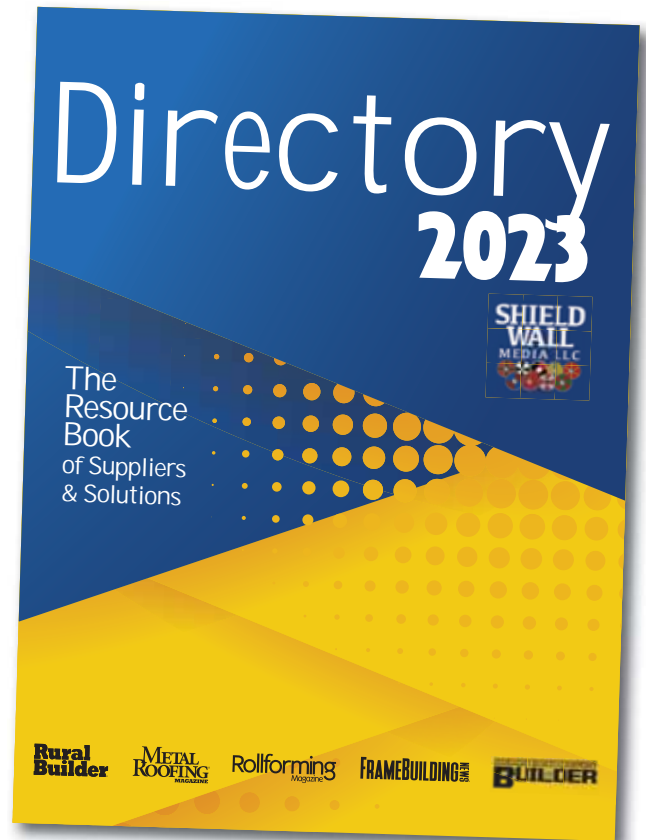
Big fans are prevalent for ventilation, like the ceiling fans from Big Ass Fans. Place two 16-footers in a riding arena and not one corner is un-aired, Noble says.

“It’s all about color-matching for ventilation!” said Cahill. “For example, while white used to be the only available option, many industry professionals are hopping on the color-match trend with color-matched gable and wall louvers, as well as color-matched ridge vents. People are also adding bale and Dutch doors to provide additional through-ventilation into a building and circulation in and out of the enclosed stall locations.”

“While some ventilation products may be ‘trending,’ one should always consider ventilation needs over trending products. Keep in mind, it’s ideal for the intake and exhaust to be equivalent; however, if they are not identical, a slightly larger intake than exhaust is preferred. ... When it comes to air exchange, nothing is ‘trendier’ than an exemplary, build-specific, ventilation system,” said Clark. **FBN**

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