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JANUARY 2025  
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**NAILS vs.  
SCREWS**  
WHICH TO USE?

**HOW TO  
MAXIMIZE THE  
BENEFITS OF  
EARNED  
MEDIA**

**THE  
OTHER  
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**ALUMINUM IN  
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# Data Supports Change

try to avoid publisher's letters when possible. Sometimes they are unavoidable because there is so much going on.

Last month we added audio to our magazine website, so you can listen to the articles. The next step is our content will be listed in podcasts on Apple, Spotify, YouTube and other locations. Where video is available, you will see the magazine pages so you will see pictures, graphics and the display ads within the print version of that article.

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

for our magazines and shows.

We are making a huge change to the Garage, Shed & Carport Builder Show for 2026.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Have a fantastic 2025.

— Gary Reichert, Publisher

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**EDITOR'S NOTE //**

# Post-Frame Prowess

It's that time of year again. The Christmas and New Year's holidays (among others) are headed our way and will be over in a flash. Following immediately after will be the January hurry and scurry to launch new business initiatives and projects to get 2025 off to a strong start.

At least that's what it's like in the Shield Wall Media world. Now that the January edition is wrapped up and you hold it in your hands, it's time to really knuckle down and focus on some really important things heading our way. Top of mind is the Buildings of Distinction, which, as hard as it is to believe, is appearing in the next edition! We've received several post-frame construction projects to feature in this special edition, but we have space for more ...

It'd be my pleasure and honor to bring you the biggest and most impressive edition that is packed with previously unpublished post-frame buildings. If you've had a hand in building a project, either as a supplier or a builder, that you think shows post-frame in its best light, please send it our way. All we need are a handful of photos, a list of materials used, and a brief description of the build. You can upload your projects with our convenient online form at <https://framebuildingnews.com/get-your-project-featured-free/>.

If published, you'll receive a Buildings of Distinction badge to promote your achievement. Plus, we're giving you more this year: If your project is published, we'll provide you with a press release announcing

that your company's project was published in nationally circulated *Frame Building News*. You can send it to your local media outlets and newspapers, which will maximize your business exposure. So not only will your work be recognized among your peers, you'll be able to promote your company as earning national attention for your work ... that's a powerful message for potential customers in your area.

**Don't wait to send in your projects — the deadline is January 23!** It's a great opportunity for a strong start to 2025 by promoting what can be achieved with post-frame construction — and as an added benefit your company can get some bonus free media exposure.

— Karen Knapstein, Editor





48

## 6 **Frame-Building Flashback**

Nails vs. Screws in Post-Frame Construction

## 12 **Aluminum**

The “other” metal in post-frame building

## 16 **Earned Media**

Leveraging your industry expertise

## 18 **Supplier Spotlight**

Meet A.J. Manufacturing

## 24 **Business Building**

Maximize business growth with post-frame homes

## 26 **Post-Frame Builder Show**

Top reasons to attend this new show in Pennsylvania

## 28 **Products at the Expo**

Find these – and more! – products at FBE 2025

## 32 **Frame Building Expo 2025**

Details for Knoxville post-frame event

## 33 **Ladder Safety**

March is Ladder Safety Month

## 44 **Views from BCMC**

Component manufacturers gathered in Milwaukee

## 51 **CSI: Construction Survey Insights**



44



18



# DEPARTMENTS

- 3 Publisher's Note / Editor's Note
- 34 Calendar of Events
- 36 News
- 40 Business Connections
- 47 New Products
- 48 Project of the Month
- 51 Construction Survey Insights



6



28

**GO TO PAGE 15 TO  
SUBSCRIBE  
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**ON THE COVER:**

Stewart Brothers Construction completed this build in Athens, Tennessee. The roof is made with Best Buy Metals' 26 ga. Titan Loc 100 - Standing Seam Metal Roof Panels, and the siding is 29 ga. Craftsman Board and Batten Steel siding - HD Barn Red. Photo courtesy of Best Buy Metals.

## INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

Company	Page #
Acu-Form	42
ASC Machine Tools Inc	40
ASCO Machines USA	40
Atlas Building Products	29
Aztec Washer Company	41
Cold Spring Enterprises	40
Daystar Systems LLC	41
Direct Metals Inc	40
Dripstop™	52
Dynamic Fastener	IFC
E-Impact Marketing LLC	19
Everlast Roofing, Inc.	41
Flack Global Metals	7
FootingPad	23
Golden Rule Fasteners	42
Hixwood	31
Kevmar Manufacturing	40
Marion Manufacturing	42
Maze Nails	11
Midwest Machinery & Automation	20
Metal Rollforming Systems	21
MWI Components	9
Perma-Column LLC	13, 41
Pine Hill Trailers	40
Planet Saver Industries / GreenPost	42
Red Dot Products, LLC	40
RetroFitClip	41
rFOIL Reflective Insulation	42
Rigidply Rafters	25
Samco Machinery	41
SmartBuild Systems	17
SpeedLap LLC	42
Stan Group dba: Liberty Seamless	41
Starwood Rafters	37
SteelGrip SAMM, Inc	40
United Steel Supply	41
Wick Buildings	31

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This article was originally published in the August 2005 edition of Frame Building News.

**FOR 30+ YEARS FRAME BUILDING NEWS** has been providing the news, trends and resources builders need. If you have a post-frame project on a historic building, we'd love to see it, and share it with our readers!

Contact Karen Knapstein, [karen@shieldwallmedia.com](mailto:karen@shieldwallmedia.com), forwarding all the information you have about the materials used, challenges faced, and a few hi-res photos. In the meantime, enjoy a bit of post-frame history!

# Screws vs Nails

Post-frame industry debates fastener choices

**S**crews and nails. Nails and screws. Post-frame buildings have long enjoyed the option of two distinct products available for fastening metal panels to their wood-frame structures. Conversations with builders and fastener manufacturers indicate that screws have emerged as the fastener of choice in this building application.

"We still sell a few nails, but most of the market has gone to screws for attaching panels," says Joe Stager of Triangle Fastener.

One big builder embodies this trend. Cleary Building Corp., long a proponent of using nails, in April began using galvanized screw fasteners color matched to sidewall panels on its buildings. Cleary continues to use nails to fasten roof panels, but in a release to its customers the company says it "recognizes that the industry is changing and we are seeing a progression to screw fasteners in the marketplace."

Even so, many builders still prefer nails, and the old standby has retained a loyal following. "The market has gone to screws, but because nails are more economical, they are still holding their own," says Kim Pohl of Maze Nails. "We realize the industry has migrated to screws, but we still sell a lot of our rubber washer nails — it's not a growing business, but we've maintained."

If you are new to the business, or just trying to decide whether to use nails or screws — or both — on your post-frame projects, consider the following:

## Installation

Some builders and manufacturers claim screws are easier to install, and vice versa. Jay Levy of Ideal Building Fasteners says neither should pose a problem to an

experienced crew. "If the crew is trained properly, the fasteners will be installed properly," he says. "If you put a guy up on a roof with a hammer on his first day, he's going to do more damage than a guy who's been doing it for 10 years. It comes down to putting a guy on the job who has some expertise."

Each has its advantages. Dave Webster of Leland Industries notes that screw guns have reduced operator training time and reduced fatigue, allowing for more consistent, damage-free fastening. Ken Webb of Dynamic Fastener says drill time for his company's fasteners is fast, 1.5 seconds per installation, and says, "there's a good chance of damaging the panel when installing nails with a hammer." Levy says that because of screw guns' nosepieces that prevent overdriving, it is easier to train people to run screws than to hammer nails.

Stuart Deniston of Deniston Company says that he advises builders using screw fasteners on a roof to position them in the flats of metal panels, as opposed to installing nails through the high rib. "With a nail, you can control the last hit, but with the fastener, the gun can overdrive it and dimple the metal," he says. "If the dimple is on the rib, that's a potential problem."

Maze's Tom Koch says that in some rural building locations, good access to electricity is difficult, and a small generator might not be enough to run a screw gun. "Using nails, all you need is a hammer," he says. Koch says that while a screw gun is easier on an installer's arm, "A good man with hammer and nails would outperform a man with screws."

## Cost

Determining a standard cost difference between nails and screws is impossible,



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## FLASHBACK 2005 //

given the differences in lengths, base metals, coatings, etc. Levy estimates screws cost about 20 percent more than nails, “which from our standpoint is not much,” he says, “but 20 percent is 20 percent.”

Everyone agrees nails are a more economical option than screws, but are a building’s fasteners the best place to watch costs? It depends on the application, says Deniston. “If you’re building chicken barns in Arkansas, you might want cheaper fasteners, but if you’re building horse barns in Kentucky, then you want something that will hold up really well,” he says.

Stager links post-frame’s migration from nails to screws with its evolution from primarily agricultural buildings to more visible structures. “This isn’t to say anything bad about it, but it used to be that metal panels were used to keep hogs dry,” he says. “Now the metal panels are being used more in residential and commercial applications than in the past. A couple leaks aren’t a big deal when you’re covering hogs, but it’s different where the panels are used today.”

### Pullout values

“Screws tie the building together tighter over a longer period of time and provide better building diaphragm dynamics,” says Larry Harsila of Trufast.

Testing backs up these claims. Results provided by Triangle Fastener show that depending on the type of wood being penetrated, screws have two to three times more pull-out strength than nails. Across four types of wood, nails had a pullout value of about 400 pounds, compared to 1,200 pounds for screws in yellow pine, 1,100 pounds for screws in oak, and 800 pounds for screws in white fir.

“That’s not to say 400 pounds isn’t enough, just that screws will give you more pullout strength,” says Stager. “If you’re happy driving a Chevrolet, why buy a Cadillac?”

Pohl says Maze and one of its customers conducted similar testing, with less disparate results: the average withdrawal value of Maze nails driven to a depth of 1-1/4



inches into Southern Yellow Pine was about 600 pounds, while screws driven to a depth of 1 inch averaged about 800 pounds of withdrawal strength. “There was some more holding power with the screw, with the nature of how a screw works, but not that much more,” Pohl says.

Says Deniston: “Screw fasteners have

better pullout values, but I wouldn’t call it a big difference.”

### Aesthetics

While a fastener’s structural properties are its most important traits, looks are important, too. Just as more importance is being placed on metal panels’ coatings,






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post-frame fasteners are being counted on to retain their color-matched appearance for longer periods of time.

Webb touts Dynamic's in-house painting operation, and says the company's color-matched screws will hold up over time. "No need to be concerned about paint chipping off the heads of screws when installing with a screw gun," he says. "Painted nails' heads can chip when installed with a hammer."

Maze also manufactures painted nails to match roofing and siding colors, and Pohl says the nails' heads are checkered to hold the paint when hammered.

### Leak protection

Manufacturers selling screws unanimously say that screws are better at preventing leaks in a post-frame building than nails. "Screws provide a much stronger, positive weather seal than nails

## What do you use?

Does your building company use screws or nails? We'd like to know what you use and why. Write *Frame Building News*, PO Box 255, Iola, WI 54945 or send an e-mail to [karen@shieldwallmedia.com](mailto:karen@shieldwallmedia.com).

when attaching metal panels to wood framing members," says Cindy Weaver of SFS intec.

Maze's Pohl disagrees, and says nails hold their own. "Over the years, many of our customers have found that leaking complaints come up no more often whether nails or screws are used," she says.

Fasteners employ a rubber washer to help prevent leaks. Proper installation is key here; certain nails and screws are more forgiving than others when not driven at a 90-degree angle to the panel.

### Using both

Like Cleary, there are builders who will mix and match screws and nails in a single building. It is not altogether uncommon to see screws used on a roof and nails in a sidewall.

"We always recommend screwing down the roof — that's where leaks can occur, because there's a lot of snow and rain, and it's not a vertical situation," says Levy. "On sidewalls, that's more of a contractor's choice, an owner's choice. There's very little likelihood of a leak on a sidewall. Even if nails pop or back out over time, there's no standing water, and the likelihood of a leak on a vertical surface is almost nil.

"I can't not recommend nails on a sidewall. Screws hold better, but there's nothing wrong with using nails on a sidewall, especially matching panels with a painted nail, it makes for a flat surface." **FBN**



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By Steve Swaney, Mid South Aluminum

# The “Other” Metal

## Aluminum and Its Uses in Post-Frame Buildings

**S**teel has traditionally been the predominant metal used in post-frame construction, but aluminum is becoming a popular material for rainware, trim, liner and interior ceiling products in residential and commercial post-frame applications. While steel has some structural and thermal properties that make it best for certain uses, aluminum has advantages in other uses, and as a result is being considered by many builders for a number of components.

### Competitive Cost

Some people experience sticker shock when they see the cost of aluminum on a price-per-pound or per cwt., but once they learn the approximately 65% less weight differential, the cost per lineal foot becomes pretty compelling to use. The typical steel panel is .015 min. gauge, 40.875” wide, and weighs around 2.10 per lineal foot, whereas an aluminum panel the same size weighs about .72 pounds per lineal foot, or about a third the weight of steel.

### Corrosion Resistance

Aluminum has excellent corrosion resistance, which is why it’s been used so much for animal containment applications, such as chicken cages and hog pens. That’s because of the way aluminum is produced. It’s a solid substrate, unlike a steel (galvanized or Galvalume), which has a cold rolled base with a galvanized metallic alloy coating. That means when you shear steel, you have an exposed cold rolled steel edge which, short term, will create a very fine red rust line before it oxidizes over to reseat itself. Aluminum is a solid alloy plus one that is very resilient to many aggressive caustic, acidic, and more



corrosive environments and applications.

Even with aluminum’s excellent corrosion resistance, it’s extremely important that animal containment buildings are effectively ventilated and drain animal waste toward the interior portion of the building, preventing stagnant fumes and runoff from being trapped against the metal surfaces. If you enter one of these buildings and you begin coughing or your eyes are burning, the structure is not effectively circulating and exhausting the toxic fumes. Hog barns are especially prone to this, based on some of the low ceiling designs. Even stainless steel will break down over time, despite it being the “Cadillac” of corrosion-resistant metals and double the cost.

### Versatility and Formability

Aluminum is easy to work with and is a favorite material for applications that need a lot of deformation and shaping. That’s one reason that its use in the automotive sector is growing as body styles

of cars and trucks and mass transportation vehicles become more aerodynamic with slope and curves to reduce air drag. That’s also a reason that it’s always been extensively used in the aerospace industry. The nature of aerodynamics requires lightweight, strong materials in sleek and creative shapes, angles, and curves.

Aluminum’s weight savings is making a big impact in other areas as well. A lot of new heavy electric utility lines use aluminum because their lighter weight compared to steel means that they don’t need as many large towers to support them over miles and miles. Most solar panels have a high aluminum content to them as well.

### Alloy, Gauge, and Temper

Aluminum coil has a wide range of gauges, from aluminum foil to armor plating for defense vehicles. Aluminum’s combination of strength and ductility make it very unique. Aluminum beverage cans start as a flat rolled coil, are then formed



into their various shapes and sizes in high speed and high volume can lines, which again show how dramatic the metal can be reshaped!

Aluminum is categorized by the term “alloy.” The predominant aluminum alloy for building products is 3105. 3003 is an alternative with less recycled content. 3004 and 5052 can also be used for building products, but 3105 is the primary alloy to request for in building products.

Aluminum’s other key specification for end use effectiveness is known as its temper, like grade in steel. This has to do with the annealing of the aluminum to achieve certain properties within each alloy. Aluminum has four primary tempers: quarter-hard symbolized with a 2, half-hard as a 4, three-quarter hard as a 6, and full-hard as an 8. Full-hard aluminum is equivalent to grade 80 steel.

Aluminum designated H28 is used for liner, building panel, and agricultural applications. H25/H26 is typically used for rainware, gutter, and soffit in residential products. H24 is softer and is used for standing seam, trim, edge metal, and architectural roofing. So, in summary, 3105 H24 through H28 are the alloys and tempers generally used for aluminum building materials.

**Coil Sizes**

Because of the weight differential between steel and aluminum, there’s a big difference in the coil footage. A steel coil might weigh 10,000 pounds, but an aluminum coil with the same outside diameter (OD) might only weigh 4,000 to 5,000 pounds. Domestically, the aluminum industry produces aluminum up to 64 inches wide for most building

products. Some imported coils can go substantially wider, but most residential building products are narrow. So make sure your supplier factors the right OD and weights for your coils if you are new to using aluminum, as they are substantially different from light gauge steel coils.

**Roll Forming**

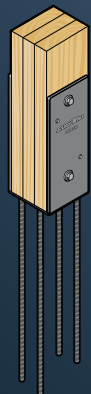
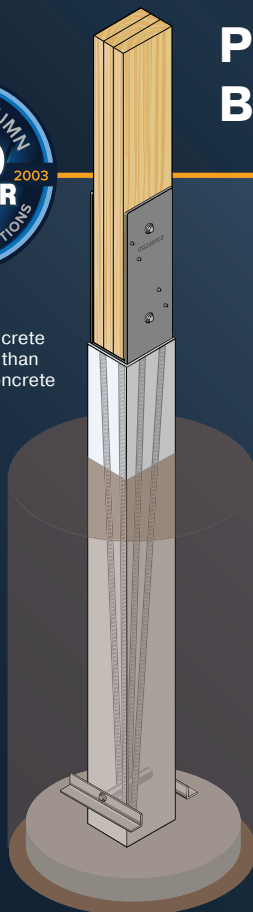
Roll forming aluminum is usually simpler and more consistent than roll forming steel. For example, aluminum is flat from edge to edge, where steel is rolled to a crowned center with the edges being several percent thinner than the center. The surface of aluminum is very smooth and consistent, and easier on your roll-former’s dies.

One area that aluminum can be a little more delicate is in shearing or cutting it to length. With aluminum’s forming prop-

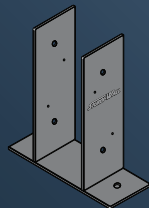
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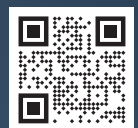
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erties, the metal has a tendency to deflect more than steel, so it's crucial that you keep your shears well sharpened when cutting aluminum to prevent the bending of the edge when shearing. In folding or using a brake press, aluminum is very easy to work with. It accepts profiles and shape changes much cleaner and more effectively than steel and is lighter to load, position, and store after fabrication.

### Common Current Uses of Aluminum in Non-Post-Frame Residential Construction

- Rain Gutters • Roof Vents • Hips
- Drip Edges
- Chimney Flashing • Roof Ridges
- Roof Caps • Roof Valleys
- Rake Edges • Gables • Gable Vents
- Eaves • Soffits • Fascia
- Skylights • Dormers • Downspouts

### Advantages of Aluminum for Post-Frame Residential Structures

Compared to steel, aluminum is more cost effective on a cost-per-linear-foot. It's also lighter weight, so it's easier to work with and more durable. It will outlast steel because it won't corrode, whereas wherever steel has cut edges, they'll rust.

A new trend we're seeing is that aluminum, which has long been used in traditional residential construction, is now being looked at more by post-frame builders who for a sizeable percentage have been doing replacement metal residential roofing and are now getting more into total home construction.

Gutters, downspouts, soffit, and fascia, for example, are some of the most commonly made products in aluminum in traditional home construction. The post-frame builders were trying to make these out of steel, which is more of a challenge and expensive on a cost per foot. Drip edge is another one that's relatively easy to manufacture. Because aluminum is light, it's easier and cheaper to ship. You can package and load more pieces on a lightweight pull-behind trailer for your contractors.

The decision to use aluminum versus steel depends on the project, whether it's

industrial, commercial, or residential. Aluminum is strong, contrary to what a lot of people think. In Miami-Dade County in Florida, where they test and certify all the roofing structures for hurricane conditions, aluminum panels typically are equal to or slightly outperform steel roofing panels. There are a lot of advantages to aluminum, but it's not always the best or right material to use, depending on the size of the building, load, etc. For structural products and long-run, low-slope roofing projects, steel is still the go-to choice.

### Aluminum's Versatility

As mentioned previously, the ability of aluminum to be reshaped makes it an excellent choice to be embossed. There are about five different patterns of embossing that look great on both mill finish and pre-painted aluminum in prints, patterns, or solids. Many high-end residential roofing shingles are now made of aluminum with multi-coat woodgrain prints. It can be heavily worked without fracturing, which is difficult with light-gauge steel.

Aluminum's smooth, flat surface makes it excellent for prints and patterns, from camo, to a rustic look, to a traditional high-end wood grain. It's available in a variety of colors and textures and any paint system available in steel is also available to be applied on aluminum.

A recent trend in residential applications is for all trim and accessories to match the roofing or wall colors. For years gutters, downspouts, soffit and fascia were different colors and many times just in white or off-white. Today, people want everything to match their roofs, walls, doors, and windows, so uniformity is becoming crucial. It creates a higher-end look. Yes, it creates more items for a builder to carry and inventory but also allows for more sales on value-added products.

### Pros and Cons of Aluminum and Steel

Steel is best for industrial commercial buildings because it allows a longer span between structural frame members. But using aluminum in smaller buildings (such as sheds) can save a lot of metal be-

## Aluminum Fast Facts

- Aluminum is infinitely recyclable, and nearly 75% of all aluminum ever produced is still in use today in its original form or recycled into a new product.
- The fastest-growing automotive material, aluminum makes vehicles lighter, more energy-efficient and rust resistant.
- Aluminum is a showcase material in some of the most popular consumer electronics today, from the Apple iPhone to the latest flat-screen TVs.
- Aluminum beverage cans contain far more recycled content than glass or plastic and save huge amounts of energy in transportation and refrigeration and are environmentally friendlier.

cause it doesn't need to support as much weight for the roof, walls, interior ceiling panels, liner, and other areas. One downside of aluminum is that it's more susceptible to hail damage, so it's not good for roofing products, especially in the hail belt. It's much better for trim accessories or higher-slope applications.

Both aluminum and steel are fire resistant and are energy efficient and recyclable. However, aluminum will expand and contract, so aluminum shouldn't be used for exposed fastener roofs because it expands and contracts too much with temperature changes. It makes a great choice for concealed fastener roofs. For corrosion resistance, aluminum is superior to steel on the surface and at exposed sheared edges, as aluminum is a pure solid alloy.

### Conclusion

While steel has been a mainstay in post-frame construction for decades, aluminum is gaining traction in the industry. With its cost effectiveness and its ability to be matched and blended in with its steel counterparts, it's destined for growth in this market! **FBN**

*Steve Swaney is a sales business development specialist for Mid South Aluminum [www.midsouthalum.com](http://www.midsouthalum.com). The company, headquartered in Jackson, Tennessee, is an aluminum distributor that specializes in pre-painted aluminum building products.*



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# Earned Media

## Leveraging Earned Media to Grow Your Business

In the dynamic world of post-frame and metal building construction, standing out in a crowded market is more challenging than ever. With the industry's rapid growth and the influx of new players, it's essential to leverage every tool at your disposal to gain a competitive edge. One of the most powerful, yet often underutilized, tools is earned media. This type of media, unlike paid advertisements, comes from editorial coverage that you don't pay for but earn through your reputation, expertise, and the value you bring to the industry.

### What is Earned Media

Earned media refers to the organic and typically unpaid exposure your company receives from various media outlets. This can include articles, news stories, blog posts, social media mentions, and more. Unlike paid media, which involves advertising that you pay for, earned media is gained by building strong relationships with media professionals and consistently demonstrating your expertise and value in the industry.

In the post-frame and metal roofing industry, earned media can take many forms. It could be a feature story in a trade magazine, a guest blog post on an industry website, a guest appearance on a Vlog or Podcast, or a mention in a news article about a recent project. The key is to consistently position your company as a leader and innovator in the field.

### The Power of Earned Media

The power of earned media lies in its credibility and reach. When a respected media outlet covers your business, it lends you a level of credibility that paid advertisements simply can't match. Readers, viewers, and listeners trust these outlets and the information they provide. This trust extends

to your business when you are featured.

Moreover, earned media has the potential to reach a much broader audience than you might achieve on your own. A feature in a leading industry publication can be seen by thousands of professionals, potential clients, and partners which will significantly increase your visibility and reputation.

### Building Relationships with Media Professionals

So where do we start? It all begins with networking and practicing a mantra I truly believe: Visibility = Opportunities! By seeing and being seen, by attending events, being open and accommodating... giving without expectation, you will start leveraging your position to garner the much-coveted earned media. Build strong relationships with media professionals in your industry. This includes journalists, bloggers, editors, and influencers. Here are some strategies to help you get started:

**1 Identify Key Media Outlets:** Make a list of the top trade publications, websites, blogs, podcasts and social media influencers in the post-frame and metal roofing industry. These are the platforms where you want your business to be featured so make sure you know who the players are and make the connections.

**2 Connect:** Building a rapport with these industry professionals can lead to future media exposure. Reach out to writers, editors and broadcasters who cover your industry. Introduce yourself and your company and offer to be a resource for their stories.

**3 Provide Value:** Media professionals are always looking for interesting stories and valuable information for their audience. But...keep in mind not to approach

this as simply a "give me some free publicity." Get to know them. Build a relationship and let them know you have a legitimate willingness to provide them with compelling stories, current and relevant data, and insights which highlight your expertise and the unique aspects of your business.

**4 Be Available:** Make yourself available for interviews, comments, and quotes. When someone from the media reaches out to you, respond promptly and professionally. Most are working on deadlines so be cognizant of their time. Becoming a reliable source can lead to more frequent coverage.

### Creating Compelling Content

In addition to introducing yourselves to the media, I also suggest another avenue. This is more organic but will certainly attract earned media. What is this magic sauce? Consistently create compelling content that media outlets will want to feature. This includes press releases, case studies, white papers, thought leadership articles and yes...social media. I've said it before and will stress it again...Be Visible! How do I go about this you may ask? Here are some tips for creating content that will capture the attention of media professionals:

**Focus on Unique Stories.** Highlight the unique aspects of your business and projects. Focus on your people, your philosophy and your culture. This can include an innovative construction technique, a high-profile project, or a unique approach to sustainability. Really showcase what makes you unique. Make use of customer testimonials. Being a good corporate neighbor in your community. Milestones and awards. These all build your image as the trusted professional in the eyes of not only your customer friends but... also the media whom are always on



the hunt for good, newsworthy content. Remember, we are talking about real Win-Win scenarios here. The credibility your company earns via this kind of coverage is invaluable. Your contribution will also be appreciated from the media's perspective as well. Collaborating is key!

### Maximizing Earned Media via Social Media

Maximize! When you receive the opportunity for the sought after media coverage, let's maximize it. This can really be an image boost for your organization so let's "make hay while the sun shines" as the old saying goes.

Social media can and should play a crucial role in amplifying earned media. When your business is featured in a media outlet, share it across your social media channels to reach a wider audience. Make sure to tag anyone mentioned in the feature. Tag the media outlet, the editor and/or publisher

and anyone else applicable to the story. This will greatly increase the visibility.

Be sure to engage with your audience. Encourage your followers to engage with the content by liking, sharing, and commenting. This increases the reach and impact of the earned media coverage. For those a little less familiar with using social media, let me make a suggestion: Engage and then ENGAGE more! My advice would be to reply to anyone who comments or shares your post. Every engagement is furthering your reach and all it takes is a few seconds of your time.

### Conclusion

Leveraging earned media is a powerful way to grow your business. By building strong relationships with media professionals, creating compelling content, and maximizing social media, you will increase your visibility and credibility in the industry.

Earned media isn't just about getting

your name out there, rather it's about establishing your business as a leader and innovator in the field. When done right, it can open doors to new opportunities, attract high-profile clients, and ultimately drive growth and success for your business. So, take the time to invest in earned media and watch your business thrive in the competitive landscape of the post-frame and metal roofing industry. **FBN**

**Randy Chaffee** brings four-plus decades of experience to the post-frame and metal roofing industries. A board member for the Buckeye Frame Builders Association and the National Frame Builders Association, follow his podcast at [facebook.com/BuildingWins](https://facebook.com/BuildingWins). No web access? Call (814) 906-0001 at 1 p.m. Eastern on Mondays to listen.



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# AJ Manufacturing Leaves the Door Open for Innovation

Through the Years Their Commitment to Customer Care Has Remained the Same.

■ By Linda Schmid

## Beginnings and Evolutions

Some companies are forever inspired by their founders and leaders past, whether because they found an opportunity that others missed, or because they were able to innovate solutions to problems they come across, or because they focused on important values right from the start. If you work at AJ Manufacturing Inc., it would be all of the above.

In the 1950s, and '60s, Luedtke Enterprises was a distributor of aluminum hand rails and accessories for homes, headquartered in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. In the late '60s, Luedtke moved the business to Bloomer, Wisconsin, and sold the business to Alan Buckman and Jerry Peterson, businessmen who saw the company as an opportunity and renamed it AJ Enterprises Inc. However, they tried to expand too quickly, purchasing a Michigan-based door manufacturing company, but the business floundered, and Peterson soon left. Buckman carried on.

In the late '90s, the company was spread thin and undercapitalized, and Buckman sold to Dale Hanson and Steve Larson. They came from the steel service center industry, but they had a vision for the company, refocusing on quality and efficiency. Serving the

markets of post-frame and storm doors, they nurtured innovation, increasing value propositions and style in their product line. This focus on quality, innovation, and on-time delivery provided the foundation for years of growth and success.

When Steve and Dale retired in the early 2000s, they sold the business to a private equity firm, an ownership group with extensive experience in B2B. The new management team proved invaluable in helping them focus and refine their product line. They discontinued products, such as storm doors, from which people only required a few colors and attributes, and which were available easily and cheaply from overseas suppliers.

The leadership's new vision moved them to the "build to order" model, a one-piece work flow. This means they developed a family of products with many choices, such as a variety of colors and features, so the end user receives an item that is not truly custom, but which feels unique due to the variety of attributes they can choose from.

The company also moved into new markets including HVAC and refrigeration equipment doors and wall panels. Manufacturers including Johnson Controls, and Carrier became customers.



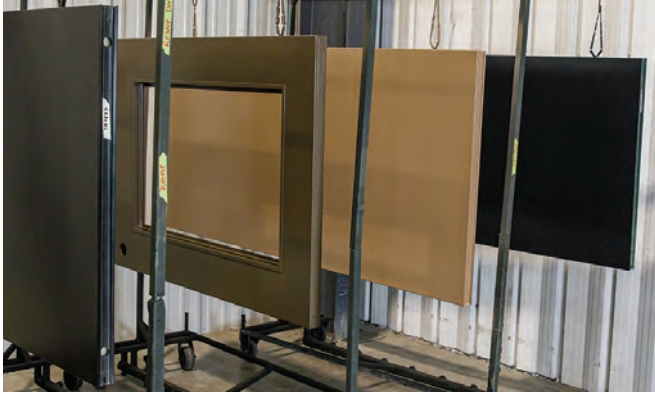
The company also produced doors for air-supported structures such as sports centers and football domes.

President Todd Carlson said that they have customers that have stayed with them for 45 years through all the changes and evolutions. He attributes that to a non-negotiable tenet that the company has been true to from the beginning: exceptional customer care.

**Challenges and Opportunities**

In 2008, the business climate was highly competitive, and the company decided one area of expansion was to provide a range of door models to meet the various needs of the builders and end users. Out of this challenge came the Responder Series. These new, heavy-duty doors were no longer created with aluminum, that was replaced with formed metal, providing a lower cost for the same aesthetic with a simpler manufacturing process. This was all in response to customer needs, but it ended up adding to their efficiency and ability to compete.

A more recent challenge that exemplifies the team’s commitment to customer care was their reaction to the COVID 19 related service lapses. They set their greatest priority on maintaining relationships and responsibilities to the customers they were partners with. While some may have expanded their reach during



*AJ matches over 200 colors for post-frame doors and windows.*

this period, they concentrated on being there for the people that depended on them.

The HVAC industry has high product performance and variability of feature expectations, and to ensure that customer service doesn’t slip, the company has a system in place to resolve customers’ problems. They get to the root, develop solutions, and get it taken care of.

“Because of the quality and care we offer, we are generally not the lowest up front cost,” Carlson said, “but often we are the

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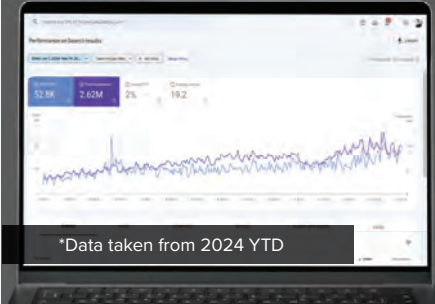
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**Success**

Carlson said their success is due to the company culture. “Employees know they have a voice, that we have shared values of honesty and a desire to solve problems. They also know that drama is not tolerated.”

Everyone is treated with respect and is expected to respect others in return as they express different viewpoints or offer suggestions.

The company celebrates employees’ contributions, starting with years of service. Many have had 20- or 30-year anniversaries and recently an employee achieved 51 years of service.

Of course, some of the credit of a successful company is also due to vendors who function as partners, and Carlson thanks the




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**"We don't just manufacture doors and windows; we build ideas," said Todd Carlson, President of AJ Manufacturing.**

exceptional suppliers they work with.

**Advice**

Look to your predecessor for information and insights, Carlson said. Especially if you are new to the industry, be curious and ask lots of questions. As a worker or a business, it is hard to replace all that knowledge if people don't share it before they move on. Documentation doesn't capture all the insights these people have to offer Carlson added.

"Younger people tend to want to send an email instead of getting out there and talking to people," Carlson said. "If you put yourself out there, jump in and talk to others in the industry, you will learn more and make more connections, you will be better off," he added.

Carlson and team have also learned that they are nimble enough to make working remote successful for them. Engineering found that the robust computer systems they used could just as well be used from home. The whole staff found that they could stay in touch and get the information they needed through Team meetings. Obviously not every position can be done from home, but giving employees whose jobs can be completed remotely that choice is another perk that helps make many people happy.

Finally if you have a problem, admit it, and get input from others. Seek help from other professionals in the industry or educators. Be nimble and use whatever resources you can find to resolve the

problem. Meanwhile remember nothing is forever; mistakes can be corrected.

**Future Opportunities and Challenges**

Product development and market expansion is where Carlson sees the most opportunity for the company. He looks to something adjacent to what they already do, a path that has been successful for them in the past.

"If 50% of the new project is familiar, whether that is the materials used or the industry in which we are working, we can develop what is needed," Carlson said.

For example, Carlson said that adjacent to the industrial HVAC market they work in they discovered the need for data centers used for Cloud storage. The market is growing rapidly, so many doors are required for these spaces. The doors must be designed to keep the conditioned air inside to maintain computer efficiency.

Carlson's team found that they could start with the basic Access doors and modify them to meet the ever-changing performance needs of this industry.

The biggest challenge Carlson believes AJ Manufacturing faces is one they have faced many times before: managing new growth without compromising current customers because they come first. One thing he says they have going for them is they don't assume they have all the answers or that they have to figure it all out on their own. They are always glad to learn, and they take advantage of the University of Wisconsin-Stout, the Poly-Technic College, and Business Outreach to educate their people and keep up with technology. A couple of other things that work in their favor: a dynamic team that cares about their work and a long history of great customer care that they are determined to live up to. **FBN**

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# Maximizing Business Growth

Taking a Look at the Benefits of Residential Post-Frame Construction

■ By Quality Structures

In the competitive arena of residential construction, it seems that everyone is continually looking for ways to speed production while saving money without sacrificing durable structures. Post-frame construction is one such method of framing—usually associated with barns and agricultural buildings, but is increasingly surfacing as a feasible and successful alternative in residential applications. It brings multiple beneficial elements to the table that can greatly improve the bottom line of your business all while solidifying your reputation for quality and speed.

## **Simplified Construction, Reduced Costs**

Perhaps the most appealing aspect of post-frame construction is its intrinsic

simplicity. Whereas many conventionally constructed stick-built houses require elaborate footings and framing, post-frame structures rest on heavy, pressure-treated wooden posts set directly into the ground. This eliminates the need for huge excavations and concrete work, thereby drastically reducing labor and material costs.

The floor plans of post-frame houses tend to be a lot simpler, again streamlining construction even further. Being there are fewer components used and there is less complexity with design, the builders can complete projects faster, which translates to quicker turnarounds and a positive bottom line.

## **Capacity for More Projects**

The expedited construction timeline

associated with post-frame homes helps your business build more homes per year. Spending less time on a single build gives way to higher volume and, perhaps most importantly, the potential for expansion into new markets. This inherent efficiency can certainly be a competitive edge in an active housing market, in that it provides you with the capability to meet demand and capture opportunity.

## **Durability and Long-Term Savings**

Post-frame buildings are durable in nature. Strong posts with engineered trusses and quality materials offer a structure that resists harsh weather elements and stands the test of time. This inherent strength inherently ensures fewer callbacks for repair, thereby reducing warranty claims and saving your business



both time and money in the long run.

The use of pressure-treated lumber along with metal roofing and siding in post-frame construction adds to the longevity and resistance to rot, pests, and fire. This low-maintenance aspect also furthers the value proposition for the homeowner and reduces the headaches a builder might face.

### Design Flexibility and Versatility

Although post-frame construction can bring to mind images of simple barns, the method offers surprising design flexibility. The post-frame homes of today can range from various architectural styles to finishes and features. The open floor plans typical of this type of construction invite customization, enabling homeowners to create spacious, flexible living areas.

The flexibility of post-frame construction isn't limited to aesthetics. Such structures can also adapt to various terrains and different soil conditions; thus, these may open opportunities for more building sites that otherwise would not have been suitable. It opens up new opportunities for your business to be able to take on more clients with unique property needs.

### Efficiency and Sustainability of Energy

There are possibilities for improving energy efficiency in post-frame construction. Posts are spaced wide to allow for superior insulation inhibiting heat transfer hence cutting on energy bills. Furthermore, the specification of ecological products like those formed from engineered woods and recycled metal may help reduce the effects of construction on the environment. There is always an opportunity to embrace energy efficiency and sustainability in a post-frame build that will sit well with any environmentally conscious homeowner as well as capturing green building funding.

### Conclusion

There is much that speaks for post-frame construction in comparison with the traditions among home builders. The advantages represent the absence



of barriers in functionality, including required construction time, sturdiness, and ease of design, all of which can benefit your business on its profitability, productivity, and value. They also illustrate that it is possible to attain higher efficiency in construction operations, bid

on more projects, and create strong, well-designed homes that will serve modern families well in the years to come. **FBN**



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**6** There is no confusion about the audience for the show. This is a show for buyers and business owners.

— C

**7** To interact on a personal level with vendors, industry experts and peers. The importance of and a firm handshake in today's communication is more impor

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12

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**10** The event being two days allows me to get in, do what I need to do and be home for the weekend with my family.



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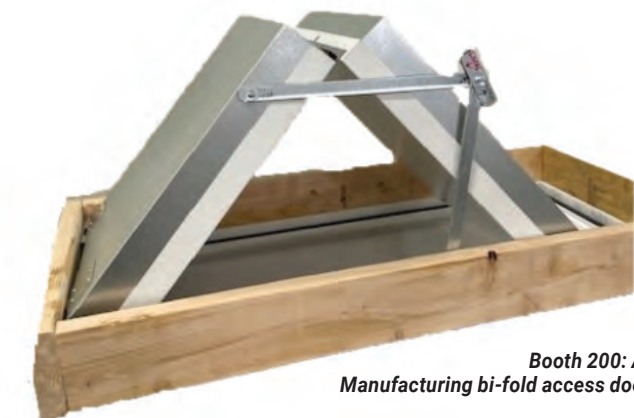
■ By Karen Knapstein

The 57th Annual NFBA Conference and Expo takes place at the Knoxville Convention Center from April 2-4, 2025 in Knoxville, Tennessee. More than 150 companies will fill the expo space, including A.J. Manufacturing, ASC Machine Tools, Atlas Building Products, MWI Components, Maze Nails, Strongwall Columns, and many more.

Builders can walk the Expo floor free of charge; free Expo passes are good for any individual engaged in the business of constructing post-frame buildings. Here is a preview of a few of the materials and components you'll find on the Expo floor.



**Booth 416: ASC Machine Tools Roll Up Door Seaming & Drum Winding Station.**



**Booth 200: AJ Manufacturing bi-fold access door.**

AJ Manufacturing (Booth 200) is exhibiting its energy-efficient ceiling access doors pre-hung in self-flashing, fully weather stripped frames. The 24" x 36" and 24" x 48" doors are available in 4" and 6" panel thicknesses. The 4" doors offer R-24 insulating value while 6" thick panels are R-42. Doors are shipped with egress handles. Bifold doors include hold-open struts. Ceiling Access doors can be installed with the Patent Pending Insulation Dam Kits fabricated out of 24-gauge steel that can manage up to 20" of blown cellulose or fiberglass batt insulation.

ASC Machine Tools (Booth 416) will be advising attendees about its Roll Up Door Seaming & Drum Winding Station. ASC designs and manufactures seaming tables and drum Winding stations for the production of roll up doors. The company's standard unit accepts variable door width between 3.5 feet and 20 feet. The drum winding station features a single or dual servo drive system with custom mandrel head attachments or shaft-clamp system.



**Booth 428: Atlas Building Products Ultimate Metal Screw.**

Atlas Building Products (Booth 428) will be the exhibitor to visit to experience the performance of Ultimate Metal Screws, designed for tough construction demands. Featuring a cast zinc head for durability and paint adhesion, a TCP self-drilling point for quick installation, and an EPDM washer for a watertight seal, these screws



**Booth 1138: Maze Nails Hardened Post & Framing Nails.**



deliver reliable results. With carbon steel construction and a zinc-plated finish, they resist corrosion and are backed by a lifetime red rust warranty.

**Maze Nails (Booth 1138)** is featuring its H528A- 5" x 5 1/2" gauge Hardened Post-Frame Ring Shank Nails at Frame Building Expo 2025. These oil-quench hardened nails comply with the ASTM Standard Specification F1667 Table 45, Type 1, Style 30 Post Frame Ring Shank Nails. Sharp ring shanks provide excellent holding power in posts, trusses, and timbers. The oil-quench nails drive well without breaking for a smooth and dependable application. Plus, Maze "Pole Barn" nails are 100% American-made.



**Booth 509: MWI Components space-accessible cupola.**

**MWI Components (Booth 509)** has been working to add features to its cupolas to enhance usability. One feature they have been developing is window accessibility. This feature allows builders and owners to easily access the space within the cupola once it is fully assembled on the building. The design includes four thumb screws with lock nuts, stiffeners around the edges with a sealant barrier, and the top of the window panel has a cap to protect the window panel against the elements entering the cupola.



**Booth 231: Strongwall Columns premium laminated columns.**

The Graber family and team at **Strongwall Columns** have been attending this show for years. They're excited to introduce their new premium laminated column in **Booth 231**. One of the product's features is their high-profile structural finger joint.

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**Submission is not a guarantee of publication. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for content, length, and clarity.**



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## PRODUCT FEATURE //

Focusing on quality, trust, and relationships, their goal is a quality nail lam at a fair price.

**True Metal Supply (Booth 207)** is exhibiting its True Board and Batten Steel Siding, which offers the beautiful look of realistic vertical wood siding, without the preventative maintenance. This 26-gauge or 24-gauge, 10" coverage, 3/4" batten steel siding features crinkle textured paint or wood-grain prints on a concealed-fastened panel for a seamless finish. Unlike wood siding, steel Board and Batten isn't susceptible to termite damage, chipping, cracking, or splitting, doesn't need repainting, and is extremely energy efficient.


The best place to learn about solutions to your post-frame challenges is the trade show floor. Find them in person during Frame Building Expo at the Knoxville Convention Center April 2-4. **FBN**

*Booth 207: True Metal Supply True Board and Batten Steel Siding.*



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# POST-FRAME IN TENNESSEE

Frame Building Expo Returns To Knoxville in April 2025

**N**o foolin'! The Frame Building Expo returns to the Knoxville Convention Center [701 Henley Street, Knoxville, TN 37902] from April 2-4, 2025. The event, sponsored by the National Frame Building Association, features an exhibition hall filled with more than 150 exhibitors, as well as informational seminars and special programs specifically for the post-frame construction industry.

## Expo Hours

On-site registration will be open from 4-7 p.m. Tuesday, April 1; from 6:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday, April 2; from 7 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursday, April 3; and from 8-10:30 a.m. Friday, April 4. So attendees can select the options that best suit their needs, educational tracks, which are offered from Wednesday through Friday, are divided into three categories: Business Management, Sales & Marketing, and Technical & Safety. In addition to the educational programming, the aforementioned Expo floor will also be open Wednesday through Friday. Expo floor hours on Wednesday are 1-5 p.m.; Thursday from 12-4:30 p.m.; and Friday from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

## Attendee Registration Details

Registration is open now. The NFBA member early bird rate (registration before Feb. 18, 2025) is \$80 for full conference access and \$205 for non-members. After Feb. 18, registration is \$100 for members and \$250 for non-members. On-site registration will be \$120 for members and \$290 for non-members.

If builders are attending the conference for only one day, the early bird admission registration cost for the conference is \$35 for members and \$65 after Feb. 18. Non-member builders will pay \$90 early-bird conference registration for one day or \$150 if registering after Feb. 18.

Builders can enjoy free admission to walk the Expo floor. Free admission is limited to builders and only admits attendees to the Expo floor.

The early-bird registration rate (on or before Feb. 18) for non-exhibiting supplier members is \$320; after Feb. 18 the rate is \$420. Early-bird registration for non-member, non-exhibiting suppliers is \$800; the rate goes up to \$930 after Feb. 18.

## Getting There

Courtesy of guidance from the NFBA, visitors traveling Eastbound on I-40 should take Exit 388 onto 441 South (Henley Street) to downtown Knoxville. The Convention Center is on the right at the corner of Henley Street and Clinch Avenue.



*The Expo floor at Frame Building Expo, scheduled for April 2-4, 2025 in Knoxville, Tennessee, will feature many supplies and solutions for post-frame builders. PHOTOS BY SHIELD WALL MEDIA.*



If traveling Westbound on I-40, take Exit 387. Turn right onto Western Avenue. At the third traffic light turn right onto Henley Street. The Convention Center is on the right at the corner of Henley Street and Clinch Avenue.

If traveling to the convention center by way of Southbound I-275, at the I-275/I-40 interchange, bear right onto 441 South (Henley Street/downtown Knoxville). The Convention Center is on the right at the corner of Henley Street and Clinch Avenue.

Those traveling Northbound on U.S. Highway 129 (from McGhee Tyson Airport), take 129 North. Take ramp to I-40 East (Asheville), stay in the right lane to Exit 388 onto 441 South (Henley Street) into downtown Knoxville. The Convention Center is on the right at the corner of Henley Street and Clinch Avenue

## Need More Help?

Anyone with questions or looking for more information can contact the NFBA's Sherry Freier at [sfreier@nfba.org](mailto:sfreier@nfba.org) or 800-557-6957. See you in Knoxville in April! **FBN**



# Every Step Matters

National Ladder Safety Month Coming in March



**American Ladder Institute seeks to keep workers safe.**

**T**he months leading up to March and National Ladder Safety Month are critical because the milestone month does more than amplify a safety message; it also celebrates message penetration and accident reduction. The American Ladder Institute (ALI, <https://www.americanladderinstitute.org/>), the only approved developer of safety standards for the U.S. ladder industry, is the presenting sponsor of National Ladder Safety Month. ALI believes ladder accidents are preventable with thorough safety planning, training, and continuous innovation in product design. Through its advocacy for and promotion of Ladder Safety Month, people, organizations, and businesses receive and, in turn, help spread the message. Most important, more people learn about proper ladder safety.

Each year's National Ladder Safety Month has its own theme and focus areas for each week in the month. This year's theme is Every Step Matters.

Topics of weekly focus are:

Week 1: Training and Awareness

Week 2: Inspection and Maintenance

Week 3: Stabilization, Setup, and Accessories

Week 4: Safe Climbing and Positioning

The goals of National Ladder Safety Month are to raise awareness of ladder safety, decrease injuries and fatalities caused by ladder misuse, and increase the number of people certified in Ladder Safety Training.

There are so many resources available to help properly train all tradespeople on how to use a ladder safely and effectively. ALI itself maintains three separate websites loaded with valuable information. Of particular interest should be [laddersafetytraining.org](http://laddersafetytraining.org). As its URL makes clear, the site is ALI's central hub for ladder safety training material of every type.

Individual users can register and deepen skills or brush up on safety. Managers and supervisors can customize curriculum for employees, create work groups, email training notices to their team members, and track who is taking their training – and how they're doing on their tests.

## About the American Ladder Institute

Founded in 1947, the American Ladder Institute (ALI) is a not-for-profit trade association dedicated to promoting safe ladder use through ladder safety resources, safety training, and the development of ANSI ladder safety standards. ALI also represents the common business interests of its members, who are comprised of the leading ladder and ladder component manufacturers in the United States and Canada. National Ladder Safety Month, observed each March and spearheaded by ALI, is the only program dedicated exclusively to promoting ladder safety, at home and at work. **FBN**



**This ladder features the LevelSafe Pro ladder leveling system.**  
PHOTO COURTESY OF WERNER LADDER.

**January**

**Jan 15-16,** Garage, Shed & Carport Builder Show, Greenville Convention Center, 1 Exposition Dr., Greenville, South Carolina. <https://garageshedcarportbuildershow.com/>

**Jan 20-22,** MCA Winter Meeting, Westin Cape Coral Resort Cape Coral, Florida. <https://metalconstruction.org/>

**February**

**Feb 17-19,** FGIA Annual Conference, Hyatt Regency Minneapolis, Orlando, Florida. <https://fgiaonline.org/>

**Feb 19-21,** International Roofing Expo (IRE) Henry B. González Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas. [www.theroofingexpo.com](http://www.theroofingexpo.com)

**Feb 25-27,** National Association of Homebuilders (NAHB) — International Builders' Show (IBS) 2025, Las Vegas Convention Center (LVCC), Las Vegas, Nevada. [www.buildersshow.com](http://www.buildersshow.com)

**Feb 25-27,** ABC Convention 2025, Las Vegas, Nevada. <https://abconvention.com>

**March**

**Mar 5-7,** Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association (SMLA) 2025 Spring Meeting & Expo, Hyatt Regency, Savannah, GA. [www.smla.org/](http://www.smla.org/)

**April**

**April 2-4,** Frame Building Expo (FBE), Knoxville Convention Center, Knoxville, Tennessee. <https://nfba.org/>

**April 2-4,** NASCC: The Steel Conference, Kentucky International Convention Center, Louisville, Kentucky. [www.nascc.aisc.org](http://www.nascc.aisc.org)

**April 22-25,** 2025 Inside Self-Storage World Expo, Caesars Forum Conference Center, Las Vegas, Nevada. [www.insideselfstorage.com](http://www.insideselfstorage.com)

**June**

**June 4-6,** Florida Roofing & Sheet Metal Expo, Gaylord Palms Convention Center, Kissimmee, Florida. [www.floridarooft.com](http://www.floridarooft.com)

**June 25-26,** Post-Frame Builder Show, Spooky Nook Sports Lancaster, Manheim, Pennsylvania. [www.postframebuildershow.com](http://www.postframebuildershow.com) **FBN**

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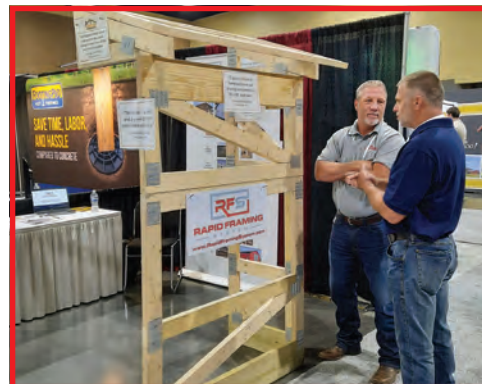
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**\$50.00 PER PERSON**

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Tickets also available at the door.

### US LBM Acquires Florida's Milton Truss

US LBM, a distributor of specialty building materials in the United States, has acquired Milton Truss, a manufacturer and distributor of structural building components located in Florida.

Serving the Florida Panhandle and southern Alabama for more than 40 years, Milton Truss manufactures floor and roof trusses for commercial and residential builders at its state-of-the-art facility in Milton.

With the acquisition of Milton Truss, which will operate as part of Raymond Building Supply, US LBM now operates six component manufacturing locations in Florida. Charles Smith and Tim Noble will continue to lead Milton's day-to-day operations.

"The addition of Milton Truss expands our network of truss manufacturing locations in the Southeast, increasing the value we bring to builders in Florida's Panhandle and southern Alabama, and we're pleased to welcome the Milton team to US LBM," said US LBM President and CEO L.T. Gibson.

US LBM is the largest privately owned, full-line distributor of specialty building materials in the United States.

### Ambassador Supply Names Amy Stites Controller

Ambassador Supply has appointed Amy Stites as the company's new controller.

"Amy has played a pivotal role in building the accounting team, enhancing the speed and accuracy of financial reporting, and implementing operational



**Amy Stites,**  
Ambassador Supply

and financial process improvements at Orgain and Trusco," said Randy Carman, president of Ambassador Supply. "We are

thrilled to bring her invaluable expertise in-house as we continue to grow and innovate."

Stites brings over two decades of expertise in financial management, boasting a proven history of overseeing projects, driving change, and leading teams to success. In her new role, Stites will provide financial oversight of affiliates, lead banking relationships, prepare financial reports and lead short- and long-term strategic financial initiatives.

"I'm honored to join the team at Ambassador Supply," said Stites. "Having previously worked alongside the organization's umbrella of companies, I'm excited to bring my experience and knowledge to this new role as we work to improve financial processes and achieve our strategic goals."

As Ambassador Supply continues to experience growth in the residential and commercial construction market, the company is recruiting driven professionals who thrive on thinking outside the box and have a strong understanding of the industry.

### Flack Global Metals Completes Investment In Pacesetter

Flack Global Metals (FGM) and Pacesetter Steel Service (Pacesetter), two metals distribution and service center platforms, have announced the completion of FGM's acquisition of a majority ownership stake in Pacesetter's business. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

The transaction is the final step in the extensive succession planning process undertaken by Pacesetter, as a result of which Pacesetter selected FGM as its partner, based on FGM's recognized leadership status in deploying risk management and hedging strategies for the benefit of its customers. FGM's investment thesis revolves around growing the Pacesetter platform while keeping Pacesetter a stand-alone vertical within the FGM platform.

The transaction is the third material investment completed by FGM within the past 18 months, and its first addition of a

distribution and processing service center to its portfolio of direct equity investments.

BofA Securities and Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP advised Pacesetter on the transaction.

NSPS Metals LLC, Pacesetter's joint venture with Nippon Steel Trading Americas, Inc., an affiliate of Nippon Steel, is not a party to the transaction, and its assets, including NSPS's service center facility located in Houston, will not be included in the new FGM-Pacesetter partnership.

Founded in 1977, Pacesetter is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, with service center locations in Atlanta and Chicago that offer steel slitting, blanking, cut-to-length and toll processing services. In 2010, FGM launched with the mission to reinvent how metal is bought and sold. The company has evolved into a hybrid industrial organization specializing in the buying, selling, manufacturing, trading and investing in flat rolled steel.

### Triangle Fastener Corp. Acquires Pro Fastening Systems

Triangle Fastener Corporation (TFC) has announced that as of 11-1-2024 it has finalized an acquisition agreement with Pro fastening Systems, Inc. (PFS).

Since its founding in 1980, Pro Fastening Systems, Inc. has been a leading provider of specialty fasteners and products to construction industry professionals across the USA with special emphasis in the Midwest. In 2012, PFS Acquired Ink Smith, a wholesale distributor of sealants and waterproofing products. TFC will retain all 42 PFS employees with Don Egan remaining in a senior management role.

With the addition of the PFS business, TFC will now have 31 branch locations and three distribution centers across the United States. The company will leverage PFS's existing sales infrastructure, as well as the expertise of knowledgeable personnel to provide a strengthened market position and allow it to better serve



its customers. The acquisition of PFS fits well with the company's long-term plans to grow its business through acquisitions of successful fastener distributors in large markets not currently serviced by Triangle Fastener Corp.

The Triangle Fastener Corporation was started in 1977 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and has since grown to 27 branch locations and three distribution centers. Through focusing on roofing, metal building as well as the drywall and acoustical trades, TFC has been able to continually grow its portfolio of business.

**ABC Supply Co., Inc. Opens Three New Locations in the Midwest**

ABC Supply Co., Inc., the largest wholesale distributor of roofing and other select exterior and interior building products in North America, has recently opened three new locations in Chicago, Illinois; Hudson, Wisconsin; and Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin.

ABC Supply is excited to announce its newest locations, demonstrating its commitment to providing greater support to area contractors.

Chicago, Illinois: Located at 1760 N Kingsbury St. Branch Manager Gustavo Garcia joined ABC Supply in late 2023, bringing 14 years of long-standing relationships and industry experience in the Chicago area.

Hudson, Wisconsin: Located at 2310 O'Neil Road. Branch Manager Matt Fiala joined ABC Supply in 2017 at the Savage, Minnesota, location where he leveraged over 30 years of operations and leadership experience to help drive business growth.

Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin: Located at 520 Forest Ave. Branch Manager Moe Zahringer joined ABC Supply in 2018 at the Appleton, Wisconsin, location and received the Midwest Region's Rookie of the Year award in 2019.

**Central States Building Works Welcomes Jason Monday as Vice President of Sales**

Central States Inc. has announced Ja-

son Monday is joining their Central States Building Works division as the new Vice President of Sales. Monday will lead a team fostering a culture of innovation and excellence while building on Central States Building Works' commitment to providing top-tier products and engineering services to the industry.

Monday brings almost three decades of extensive sales, leadership, and marketing experience, forging strong client relationships and leading teams that drive both bottom-line results and customer satisfaction. He comes to Central States from Euroline, a steel window and door manufacturer, where he spearheaded strategic implementations for sales and marketing initiatives. Prior to Euroline, Monday spent much of his career at Nichiha USA, a manufacturer of high-functioning cladding for commercial and residential applications, leading frontline B2B sales, including managing, training, and motivating sales teams.



**Jason Monday, Central States Building Works**

**Aspen Pumps Group Acquires Malco Tools**

Malco Tools, Inc. one of the nation's top manufacturers of high-quality tools for

the HVAC and building construction industries, has announced that it has been acquired by Aspen Pumps Group.

Aspen Pumps Group (Aspen) was founded by three air conditioning engineers in 1992, and now sells to over 100 countries worldwide. The United Kingdom-headquartered company has expanded globally to become an award-winning leader in products and solutions for the heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVAC/R) industry, including condensate removal pumps, tools, cleaning chemicals, support systems and accessories.

With deep experience and capabilities in the HVAC/R aftermarket, Aspen has a strong portfolio of products and brands that strategically align with Malco, which will allow both brands to continue to grow and serve new markets. Malco Tools will continue to operate from its headquarters in Annandale, Minnesota, and will become the North American headquarters for Aspen, bringing on new tools and product lines that will serve a larger HVAC/R market. As part of this strategic expansion, Malco Tools President and CEO Rich Benninghoff will take on the new role of CEO of Aspen Pumps Group North America, effective immediately.

"Malco has built an extremely strong, and reputable business over the past 75 years and this agreement with Aspen Pumps Group will allow us to grow our business in ways that will allow us to be

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a successful, trusted brand for the next 75 years,” said Benninghoff. “Aspen Pumps Group is a strong partner for us from not only a business and opportunity perspective, but also from a mission and values standpoint as well. They’ve proven to us that they do what they say and focus on people first, which is important to what we do, and will continue to do at Malco.”

“We are very excited to welcome Malco Tools to the Aspen Pumps Group family,” said Adrian Thompson, CEO of Aspen Pumps Group. “Malco is an industry leader and has built a strong reputation among the HVAC and roofing/siding trades. We are looking forward to working with their talented team as we continue to grow the business and serve even more markets in the future.”

### S-5! Promotes Shawn Haddock to Vice President of Operations

S-5! has promoted Shawn Haddock, its first-ever employee, to Vice President of Operations. In his new role, Shawn is responsible for the development and training of field application engineers who provide hands-on support to installers around the world. Now based in Texas, home to S-5!’s manufacturing facility, he oversees quality and safety at the plant, manages the fulfillment department, and leads the IT department.



Shawn Haddock, S-5!

He joined S-5! in 2001 alongside his father, Rob Haddock, the company’s CEO and founder. Shawn began his career in marketing, taking on a diverse range of responsibilities—from answering phones and attending trade shows to handling advertising, creating artwork, entering orders, and coordinating production schedules before sending them to the plant.

As S-5! expanded, Shawn dedicated himself full-time to the company, immersing himself in every aspect of the business—from R&D and sales to IT and customer service. He enhanced his technical skills by taking computer classes in various software programs, becoming the go-to tech expert. He developed in-house software to streamline operations and led initiatives to build and later revamp the company’s website.

Transitioning into an operations role, Shawn initially oversaw IT, customer product support and internal product training. He worked directly with contractors and launched S-5!’s program for field application engineers, ensuring that customers received hands-on training for proper product installation while actively seeking ways to improve the offerings. A crucial part of his role has always involved building strong customer relationships.

To foster collaboration between the corporate office in Colorado Springs and the Texas plant, Shawn began traveling between the two locations, gaining valuable insights into plant operations. In 2023, he made the permanent move to Texas to further strengthen these connections.

Shawn is actively engaged with industry associations, including the Metal Construction Association (MCA), the Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA) and the Metal Building Contractors and Erectors Association (MBCEA), contributing to subcommittees and participating in educational training. Currently, he serves on the MBMA Safety Committee. In 2017, he was honored with the MCA Young Movers & Shakers Award.

“The most rewarding aspect of my job is seeing how our team has grown this company to support so many families through employment and industry growth,” said Shawn. “Being part of a business that helps people succeed and provides a stable livelihood is incredibly fulfilling. Knowing that our company is a

place where they can come to work and put food on their tables is the greatest reward of all. I’m excited about our continued growth and hope that my children will one day step into our roles and carry on the family legacy.”

### Holcim Acquires OX Engineered Products

Holcim has acquired wall insulation and sheathing solutions provider OX Engineered Products. This acquisition further strengthens Holcim’s commitment to expanding its comprehensive building envelope solutions beyond roofing, providing customers with a broader range of high-performance materials for residential and commercial applications. Holcim Building Envelope’s leadership position and national footprint in the polyiso insulation market will accelerate OX Engineered Products’ growth in polyiso solutions.

OX Engineered Products will operate as a standalone line of business within Holcim Building Envelope, led by Jamie Gentoso, Global Head of Solutions & Products at Holcim and President of Holcim Building Envelope. The strategic acquisition will expand Holcim’s building envelope portfolio into the exterior wall insulation segment.

OX Engineered Products manufactures innovative insulation and weatherization systems for residential and commercial use. In addition, its proprietary technologies range from housewraps and structural sheathing to integrated insulation solutions. OX Engineered Products serves some of the nation’s largest homebuilders and contractors through its manufacturing facilities in the Midwest and Southeast. **FBN**



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# BCMC Drives Immense Value

The Component Industry Gathered for the Annual BCMC To Learn and Connect on the Latest and Greatest

■ By Christine Wagner, Structural Building Components Association (SBCA)

ALL PHOTOS BY JANET MCMILLAN PHOTOGRAPHY.

The Building Component Manufacturers Conference (BCMC) presented by the Structural Building Components Association (SBCA) was held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, at the Baird Center, October 7-11, 2024. BCMC is the trusted venue for structural building component manufacturers and framers to learn about the latest trends, cutting-edge technologies, and ideas that are transforming their industries. This annual trade show and conference includes a dynamic exhibit floor with live machinery demonstrations, education sessions, and networking opportunities. BCMC 2024, with over 65,000 square feet of exhibitor show floor space, 120+ exhibitors, and over 1,800 attendees, was a major success. The exhibit hall provided a bright and open atmosphere for attendees and exhibitors alike, creating a fantastic space for networking, learning, and engaging with those in the industry.

To officially kick off the event, The People's Shark, Daymond John, provided an inspiring keynote address where he shared his life story with over 700 attendees. Shortly after this energizing presentation, the attendees rushed to the show floor entrance for the ribbon cutting ceremony and the opening of the exhibit hall. Attendees bustled about as they wandered around the hall, speaking with exhibitors about their products, services, equipment, technology, and advancements of the industry. Impactful and meaningful conversations filled the hall – the excitement was palpable.

The show floor featured 127 unique exhibitors, which included suppliers, machinery, equipment, tools, technology



*BCMC trade show.*



*BCMC trade show.*

and software, and more. BCMC is a rare opportunity to see all the innovation occurring in the industry in one place, giving attendees countless ideas from

peers, suppliers, and industry experts. Of the 1,857 attendees, 1,068 of them were component manufacturers, framers, or other (builder/architect, etc.). Of those





**BCMC trade show.**

1,068, more than half were key decision-makers, making BCMC a place to not only see what is out in the industry but to network and get business done.

Beyond the show floor, there were many activities available, ranging from a golf tournament, a 5K run/walk, a bike ride, and a welcome social event to a Women in Construction breakfast, roundtables, education sessions, and plant tours. These additional activities give attendees a chance

to go beyond the booth and connect in different and fun ways to build relationships with component manufacturers, suppliers, and framers across the country and beyond.

The Industry, Framer, and IT Roundtables are always a big hit – the discussions were vibrant amongst the participants, as they shared their own stories, challenges, and successes on the variety of topics covered. Topics ranged from op-



**BCMC trade show.**

erational efficiencies, IT, and risk mitigation to automation and mechanization, safety, and labor challenges. SBCA and its show, BCMC, continue to provide opportunities for its attendees to interact with others from all over, which they normally wouldn't be able to do in their own regions. BCMC brings people from across the country, and beyond, from the United States to Canada to Finland – having the ability to converse with fellow peers and learn about how they are dealing with challenges or how they've accomplished their successes is an invaluable part of the Structural Building Components Association (SBCA) and the Building Component Manufacturers Conference (BCMC).

SBCA believes that the educational aspect of the BCMC show is an important value proposition for its attendees. The peer-led sessions provide an opportunity for its attendees to learn from industry counterparts from across the nation and beyond. Learning is a lifetime effort and SBCA provides a variety of opportunities at BCMC for people to expand upon their knowledge, gain insights into best and different practices across markets, and collaborate on ideas and solutions on shared and individual challenges. Each day was filled with valuable opportunities for attendees to gain knowledge and insights into the industry. The show week consisted of supplier-led education sessions on Tuesday, October 8th, and two days of peer-led education sessions throughout Wednesday, October 9th-Thursday, October 10th; there were a variety of enriching sessions with content for component manufacturers, framers, and professionals. Popular sessions included *Preventing Injuries with the Truss & Component*



**BCMC trade show.**





**SBCA Foundation Dinner.**

*Warning Tag and Warning Sheet, Get Off Your A\$\$ and Sell Something, Navigating Efficiencies of Automation and Mechanization, and Artificial Intelligence Potential & Challenges for Wood Truss Design* – there was something for everyone.

The second day of the show kicked off with a thoughtful outlook on the industry by Zonda's Todd Tomalak – his presentation gave over 600 attendees a fresh perspective on the year ahead, which made for another lively day at BCMC. The hustle and bustle of the attendees about the convention center and the show floor demonstrated the excitement and energy within the structural building components industry; people are hungry for knowledge and connections, and want to make their business the best, enhance their processes, and ensure that they can provide great products and services to their customers, while advocating for and promoting the use of structural building components, such as roof trusses, floor trusses, and wall panels.

Another event from the week was the SBCA Foundation Dinner, which took place on October 8th at Discovery World in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Over 200 people gathered for an evening of delicious food, good company, fundraising activities, and fun. The event consisted of various fundraising efforts for the SBCA Foundation, with games of Heads and Tails and a live auction, where over \$131,000 was raised for the SBCA Foundation's charitable causes. A great accomplishment!

Also during the event, the annual SBCA Industry Awards were presented: Gene Frogale, SBCA Past-President and President of Blue Ocean Development, received the Dwight Hikel Humanitar-

ian Award and was also inducted into the SBCA Hall of Fame; BJ Louws, SBCA Secretary and President of Louws Truss, received the SBCA Industry Leadership Award; Michael Schwitter, 2024 BCMC Committee Co-Chair and Director of Sales with Alpine, an ITW Company, received the Dick Bowman Industry Enthusiast Award; and Norm McKenna, an SBCA Foundation Trustee and recent retiree of the industry, received the SBCA Chapter Service Award. The evening was a huge success filled with joy and passion for this industry and its people.

BCMC concluded with its annual Industry Celebration, with tasty Wisconsin fare and games of pickleball, bean bag toss, and a Pinewood Derby tournament, in addition to raffles, giveaways, and the announcement of the SBCA Innovation Grant People's Choice Solution for 2024. (Winners of the 2024 SBCA Innovation

Grant can be found at [www.sbcacomponents.com](http://www.sbcacomponents.com).)

Attendees left BCMC filled with excitement for the future, new knowledge, ideas, and practices to bring home to their own operations.

BCMC 2025 is already ramping up and information on registrations will be announced soon. Updates and details for BCMC 2025 in Omaha, Nebraska, September 29-October 3, 2025, will appear on [www.bcmshow.com](http://www.bcmshow.com). **FBN**

## Want More Details?

Learn more about some of the education sessions in SBCA Magazine's January/February 2025 issue at <https://www.sbcacomponents.com/sbca-magazine> and in NFC's Framing Today February 2025 issue at <https://www.sbcacomponents.com/nfc-magazine>.

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# GOLD KEY

*of Excellence Awards*



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In July, *Rural Builder* magazine will present its **Gold Key of Excellence Awards** for the 42nd time. Help us determine the names of suppliers of building materials and/or construction equipment who do the best job of providing you with all of the services and products you need to run your business successfully. You can select up to three suppliers from the following list or nominate someone new in the spaces provided below. **TAKE A MINUTE TO SUBMIT YOUR VOTE TODAY!**

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## NEW PRODUCTS //



### Pettibone Extendo 1044X Telehandler

Pettibone's Extendo 1044X telehandler is a value-driven machine that provides up to 10,000 pounds of load capacity. The new telehandler was designed to offer ample lifting power and stability without the need for outriggers, significantly reducing maintenance requirements and enhancing operational speed for users working in construction, masonry and rental applications.

The Extendo 1044X is powered by a 74-horsepower Deutz Tier 4 Final diesel engine that features a DOC muffler and requires no diesel exhaust fluid (DEF). Mounted on a side pod, the engine offers easy service access while allowing excellent curbside visibility. The telehandler delivers maximum lift capacity of 10,000 pounds and a max lift height of 44' 6".

The elimination of outriggers from the design results in faster setup times and improved maneuverability on the jobsite. It also reduces the number of components in need of periodic maintenance, thereby cutting down service time and costs. These efficiency gains are complemented by exceptional lifting performance that allows the 1044X to compare favorably with competitive outrigger-equipped units in the same weight class.

The 1044X features a three-section boom comprised of formed plates that offer greater strength while reducing weight. Boom deflection is minimized for better accuracy when placing loads. Abundant boom overlap provides smooth operation and reduces contact forces on wear pads, thereby extending service life. A bottom-mounted external extend cylinder further reduces the load on wear pads.

The Extendo 1044X comes standard with X-Command®, a Pettibone telematics program that offers real-time access to machine data, saving time and money for equipment owners and service technicians.

The operator cab features ergonomic seat,

pedal, joystick and steering wheel positions, while optimizing line of sight in all directions. An analog/LCD gauge cluster comes standard. An optional 7" digital display with integrated back-up camera is also available. The cab also offers enhanced climate control, flat bolt-in glass, split door design, openable rear window, lockable storage under the seat, and water-resistant components for easy interior washdown.

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### Simpson Strong-Tie HTTH™ Heavy Tension Ties

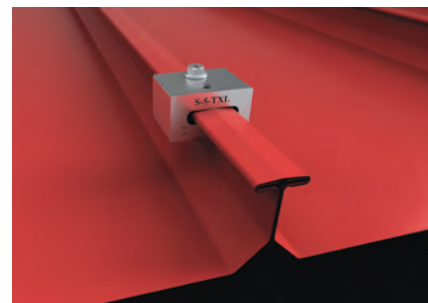
Simpson Strong-Tie is adding the HTTH6.5 to its lineup of HTT heavy-tension ties, high-strength solutions for resisting tension loads in post-pour, wood-to-concrete connections. The patent-pending, code-tested HTTH6.5 is the industry's first nailed-down holddown to achieve a 6,500-lb. allowable load, providing an economical choice when heavier loads are required.

"Previously, when a specifier needed a holdown in the 5,000- to 8,000-pound allowable load range, their options were the HTT5 heavy-tension tie or the HDU8 holddown; however, there is a large gap between the two in both design load and price, and engineers often

had to specify the more expensive HDU even if their design loads were just slightly over the HTT5 capacity," said Bryan Wert, Director of Connectors & Lateral Systems for Simpson Strong-Tie. "The launch of the HTTH6.5 offers our customers a more cost-effective solution, with a load range that bridges the gap between those two holddown options."

Suitable for residential construction and light-frame wood commercial buildings, the HTTH6.5 single-piece tension tie features a four-fold seat that reduces deflection, a tapered base to optimize strength and an optimal nailing pattern that reduces splitting at the end of the post and maximizes individual fastener capacity. It fastens with nails (in standard sizes for pneumatic nailers) or Strong-Drive® SD Connector screws. The allowable load is up to 6,500 lb. with nails and increases to 7,650 lb. when installed with SD screws.

[strongtie.com](http://strongtie.com)



### S-5! TXL Standing Seam Clamp

S-5! has announced the introduction of the S-5-TXL standing seam clamp. The S-5-TXL clamp ("TXL" is for extra-large "T") is specifically designed for T-shaped standing seam metal roof profiles with a horizontal projection of up to 1.7" (43 mm), including the McElroy Metal Trap-Tee and Morin® SymmeTry®. An innovative insert makes installation a breeze anywhere along the seam.

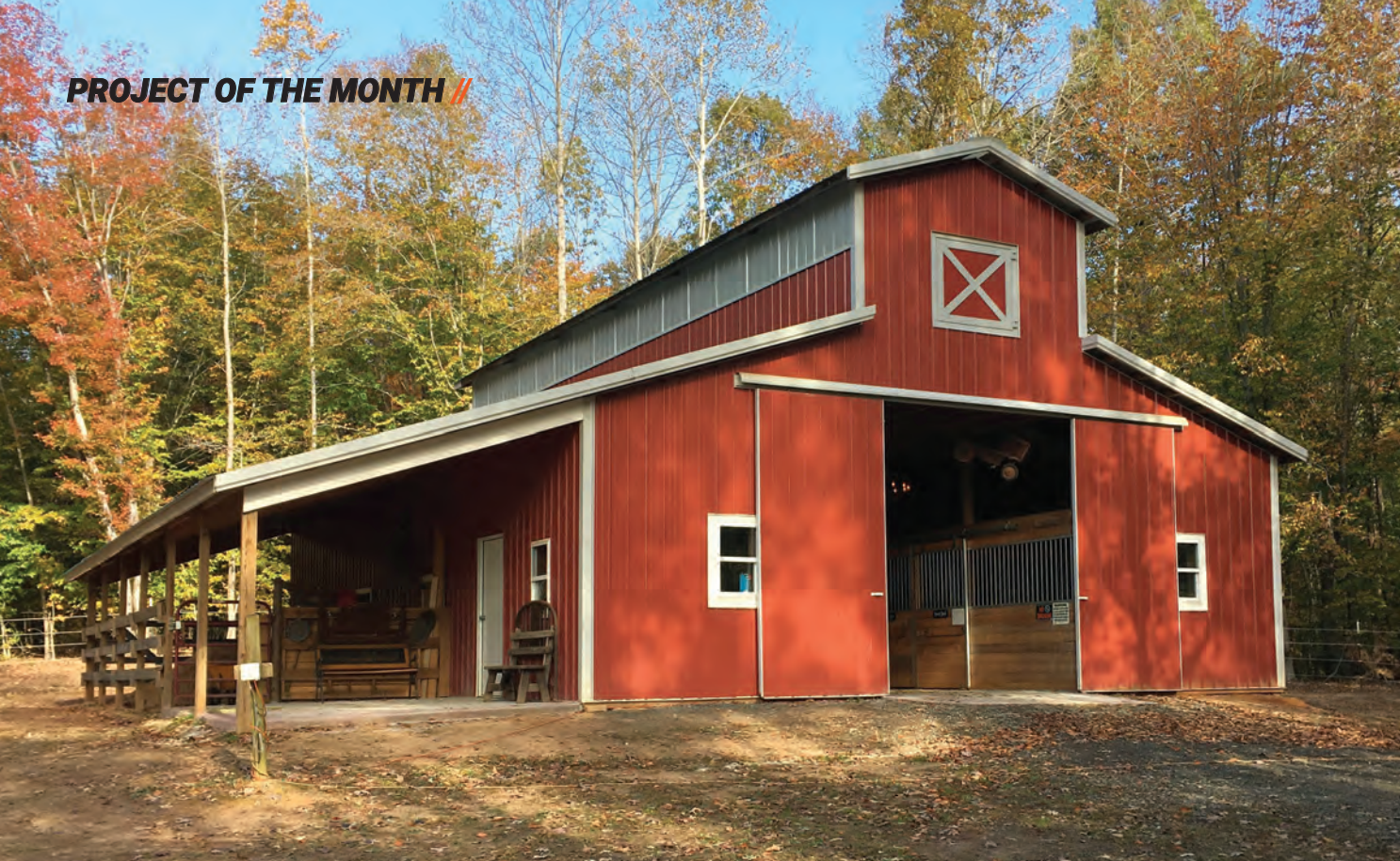
The non-penetrating S-5-TXL clamp is designed for heavy-duty snow guard systems, as well as high-wind applications. Pair with ColorGard® for a robust snow guard system to reduce the risk of rooftop avalanches.

As with all S-5!'s standard and mini clamps, the S-5-TXL has undergone rigorous load testing, including normal-to-seam (pull-up) and parallel-to-seam (drag load). The S-5-TXL has two setscrews that will dimple the roofing material but will not penetrate it, ultimately leaving the roof's warranty intact.

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF WILD ACRES FARM, MANASSAS, VIRGINIA.

# Monitor-Style Horse Barn

Owners enjoying style and convenience, boarded horses living in comfort

**W**hen the owners of Wild Acres Farm, a private horse boarding facility in Manassas, Virginia, needed to add a new stall barn, they opted for a monitor-style barn from Hansen Pole Buildings. The center of the 36' x 48' x 12' barn has the center 12' raised to 22' from end to end. Engineered by John Raby & Associates, Spokane, Washington, the building features 12" open overhangs all sides and ends and a full 12' x 48' hay loft in raised center designed for 135 psf (pounds per square foot) total load. **FBN**





## PROJECT DETAILS

**ENGINEER:** John Raby & Associates

**SIZE:** 36' x 48' x 12', raised 12' center section.  
12' x 48' roof only side shed sloping from 12' to 8'

**ROOF PITCH:** 4/12

**LOCATION:** Manassas, Virginia

**ROOF & WALL PANELS:** Fabral/American Building Components Evergreen  
Steel Roofing, Rustic Red Siding, White Trims, 29 ga. Imperial Rib

**COLUMNS:** Richland Laminated Columns 3-ply 2x6 2400msr

**SPLASH PLANKS:** Interfor 2x8 #1 SYP UC-4B CCA treated  
FDN rated Central Nebraska Wood Treaters

**FASTENERS:** Leland Industries 1-1/2" Powder-coated Diaphragm

**STRUCTURAL FASTENERS & CONNECTORS:** Simpson Strong-Tie

**PREFABRICATED TRUSSES:** Hansen Pole Buildings

**BALE DOORS:** Plyco Corp. Plyco 4350

**ENTRY DOORS:** Plyco Corp. Plyco 99 Series

**SLIDING DOORS:** Plyco Corp.

**WINDOWS:** Silverline

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# PROJECTS THAT SHOW OFF THE BENEFITS OF POST-FRAME CONSTRUCTION

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# Trends In Building Types

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

The industry data shows some interesting trends.

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

Some examples:

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

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

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

Of the respondents listing General Roofing as their primary

business, 12% build sheds.

Conversely of the respondents listing Sheds as their primary business:

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

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

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

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

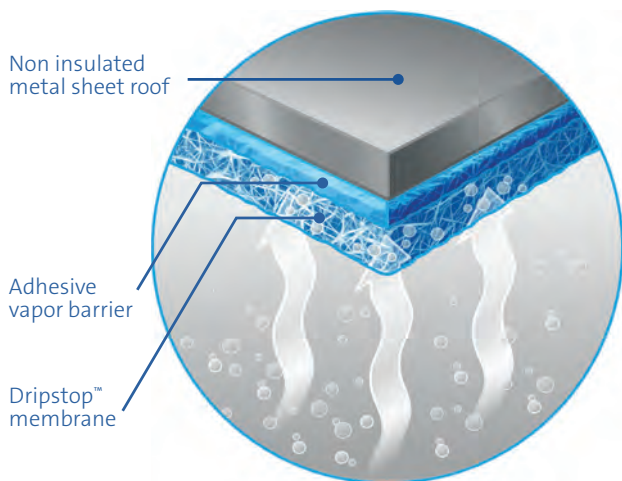
Which of these best describes your primary area of construction?	General Roofing	Metal Roofing	Other Roofing (Gutters)	Post-Frame	Metal Building (Cold-Formed)
General Roofing		53%	28%	20%	19%
Metal Roofing	21%		30%	23%	19%
Other Roofing (gutters)	25%	33%		17%	8%
Post Frame	16%	44%	8%		8%
Metal Building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

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

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