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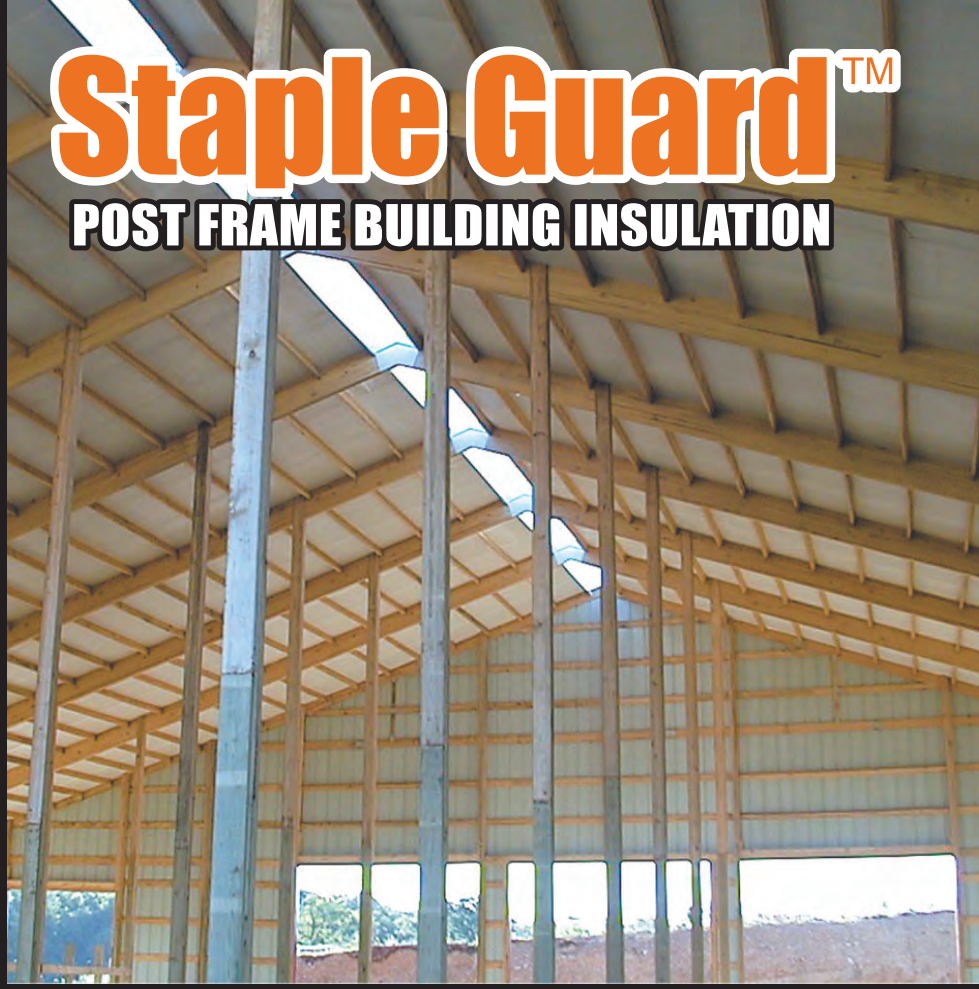

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BY GARY REICHERT

AI Can't Replace Relationships

I am an owner of Shield Wall Media, which publishes this magazine and several others. As such what I get paid is a direct result of the profitability of our magazines and shows. Getting paid, paying my employees and paying my our vendors is something I take seriously. And, we are doing well, thank you for asking.

There is a trend in publishing to eliminate human editors and writers to replace them with AI-generated content. This reduces expenses, but if you have the right editors it also significantly reduces value to readers and advertisers. Granted, with the wrong editor(s) it is about even and makes sense.

AI used for generating editorial is typically Large Language Model (LLM) and essentially predictive text. In my opinion this has two primary weaknesses.

1) Since it is based exclusively on what has already been published, it is 100% derivative. For some things, like the steps to install a skylight, that is great. Tomorrow, a skylight will be framed and sealed the same as it was last week or last year. But, in a changing business environment with taxes, tariffs, zoning and new technology, where is the expertise and insight to recognize what happens tomorrow? Historical business is for accountants. Predicting tomorrow's business environment is for entrepreneurs. That is a human endeavor.

2) AI doesn't develop relationships. LLM cannot account for the desires and personalities of readers, advertisers and stakeholders. Being at the head of a business or an entrepreneur has its lonely days. Stories of your peers' successes and struggles can provide necessary insight and potentially solve problems you did not even know you had. Business is run by humans. Humans cannot be completely removed from the information flow and have it still be applicable.

Good editors are irreplaceable. Bad editors or writers are fungible. In anything, becoming a commodity drops you to the lowest level of value. Never be a commodity in anything, personally or in business. Can you trust business advice from someone choosing the lowest common denominator as the desired path?

We do use AI and are working on some exciting ideas to use it more. We at SWM also see its limitations. As the person who signs the checks here, I can promise AI will never replace a good editor or writer. ***FBN***

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CORRECTION:
In the "Equine Essentials" product feature published in the August edition, Plasti-Sleeve was inadvertently omitted from the Foundational Elements section. Plasti-Sleeve is, of course, another option for protecting posts from harmful elements. Frame Building News regrets the oversight.

INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

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ON THE COVER:
Forklift shifting roof trusses on new residential housing development construction site.

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PHOTO COURTESY MCELROY-METALS-STEVEN-BULLOCK

Post-Frame Buildings that Last for Generations

Upsells and Improvements that Could Raise Your Reputation

By Linda Schmid

Post-frame construction has humble beginnings, but the industry as a whole has grown into something more as processes and products have become more sophisticated. This is a survey of some of the best practices to ensure long-lived buildings as many people look for longer-lasting investments. Consider whether your projects encompass all of these practices. If not, there is no need to change your process on a dime, but you could start offering upsells on items like metal panels and perhaps slowly move on to some other improvements.

How To Build Longer Lasting Structures?

The best way to ensure a building's durability is to start with quality components, then combine quality craftsmanship with the best processes currently available. We will look at select improvements in processes and products that can create long-lasting buildings.

Let's begin with some of the components that are most important to the structural integrity of the building.

Trusses and Post Connections

Among some of the early improvements in post-frame construction were pre-fabricated trusses, which are pre-engineered to meet load requirements. According to the National Association of Home Builders, about 75% of residential home builders use prefabricated roof trusses. The reasons many builders have moved to prefabricated trusses include time and cost savings.

When choosing pre-fabricated trusses, ensure that the plant they come from is certified by a third-party inspection service and that they are specifically engineered for the building and location.

Further, truss plates were formed to strengthen the trusses and help with stability. Heavy duty truss plates are preferred to distribute the load to the poles, increasing stability over joints that were simply nailed or screwed. The truss to post connection needs to be sufficient to help transfer the load to the posts; in general it is best to use heavy bolts to ensure secure assembly of the two components. Consult local codes and engineering guidelines because regional practices may vary.

Site and Foundation

If a building is to last many years, site preparation and the foundation are very important. For example if the site is level in a wet climate, the ground right by the building should be sloped away from the building so water doesn't pool there. Drainage tile can be installed to help with drainage.

Post-frame foundations are often concrete slabs, either floating or monolithic.

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The monolithic slab is generally more solid and long-lasting than a floating slab, as concrete is continuously poured to include the concrete floor and concrete footers which extend below the frost line to transfer the load to more stable ground. The posts and walls are installed atop the footings. Monolithic slabs are great in rocky areas, but they are risky in areas that are susceptible to the frost-thaw cycle. When you make a floating slab, the footers and walls are not actually attached to the slab/floor. Overall slabs can last up to 50 or 100 years or more, but they may have problems in areas where flooding is an issue because they are so low to the ground. All footings should be packed with a granular backfill so that moisture will drain away.

Stem walls are another option that is often adopted in areas with uneven ground, especially where soil erosion or shifting ground is an issue including significant frost heave, and the slab will be elevated which helps in a flood situation. Footings are sunk in the ground, then blocks, usually concrete, are placed and built up to form the stem wall. Then the slab is poured over the stem wall and the posts are anchored to the slab. A builder can opt to pour the stem wall using wood as a form, then the anchor can be embedded in the stem wall. The stem wall can be reinforced with rebar for stability. Some builders opt to leave the slab unattached to the stem wall; it floats inside the walls which can help with soil heave. Like the previous slab options, this foundation can last from 50 years to well over one hundred.

A pier and beam foundation elevates the building so that a crawl space is created that has benefits like greater access to plumbing and electrical lines, but more to the point for our discussion, it creates greater stability on a sloped site, and due to the building's elevation, there is less likelihood of flooding. The pier and beam foundation is more resistant to seismic activity, so if it is common in the area, this is a choice to consider. However, in general, pier and beam foundations may last only 15 years, unless maintenance is kept up, such as moisture mitigation and repair if needed, checking for pests, and pest removal. If carefully maintained, this type of foundation can last up to 50 years.

A simple post foundation is used for some structures, for example some ag buildings. In that case, they should be built on a solidly compacted "soil slab."

In summary, when you are looking for a long-lasting foundation, you must take several things into consideration: The climate, the groundwater table for moisture considerations, the bearing capacity of the soil, the use of the building, and previous uses of the site (are there chemicals or other lingering effects which the structure will have to contend with?). While you are probably acquainted with the foundation types that work well in the area you build, check the specific site you are working with before you decide.

RESOURCES

- Acu-Form Equipment ..... www.acuformequipment.com
- Drexel Metals ..... www.DrexMet.com
- Wick Buildings ..... www.WickBuildings.com

Posts

The load bearing posts are, of course, an important piece of post-frame construction. Initially they were timbers squared or rounded to fit into holes in the ground, then braced with horizontal beams.

Over time, builders and building owners began to see rotting of the post sections that were placed directly in the ground. As chemicals were found that could help to protect the posts, builders began using posts that were treated to avoid decay and pest abuse. The treatments used helped to keep the posts in good shape much longer. Still, wood placed directly in the ground is not the best choice if you are looking to extend the longevity of the building.

Innovative individuals in the industry began looking for solutions to this problem, and many have been developed. There are sleeves that can be placed over the posts to create barriers that keep moisture away from the section of the post in the ground. There are products that are baked until they bond with the wood, creating a surface that is virtually impermeable. There are also concrete columns that are sunk in the ground to create a pedestal for the post to connect to the wood pole above the surface. Whichever solution you choose, the standard today is that while you should use pressure treated wood, you should not put the treated wood in the ground without one of these forms of added protection.

Post Spacing

Another way to help ensure longevity is to place the posts close enough to ensure that the structure is not overstressed and can transfer the load to the ground. This can be established in a couple different ways. If the building has engineering plans, the spacing will have been specified. If the building has no engineering plans, the builder will need to consult established framing tables.

Fasteners

It is important to ensure that you are using the correct, quality fasteners. Are the materials compatible with the type of fastener you are using? If the fastener will be exposed to the weather, use fasteners with corrosion-resistant coatings, galvanized or stainless-steel fasteners.

Avoid cross-threading by ensuring that you have the right nut and bolt so that the threads align. Also take care to put the bolt in straight. If the building is in an area that experiences seismic activity, locking fasteners or thread locking compound should be applied.

Another concern is proper fastener placement. A consistent screw pattern can prevent leaks, and it will allow the metal to expand and contract, rendering the metal's thermal expansion and contraction harmless. This will make the metal roof more durable and weather resistant.

Fastening metal panels in the flat or pan instead of through the ribs provides a more secure attachment.

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Metal gauge, or thickness, should be considered when choosing roofing or siding panels. 29-gauge is the standard for many post-frame construction projects. A thicker gauge can lend greater durability if accompanied by a high level of tensile strength, which is not always the case.

Surprisingly, some thinner panels can have greater tensile strength. Check the example below:

Engineering Calculations - Tensile Strength

psi = lbs. per square inch
Grade 80 = 80,000 psi
Grade 50 = 65,000 psi
Grade 40 = 55,000 psi
Grade 37 = 52,000 psi
Grade 33 = 45,000 psi
Commercial Quality = 30,000 psi

Panel Strength Calculations

Grade 80 Panel- 29 gauge
Strength per 36" width of panel
36"x.015 (29 ga) x $\frac{80{,}000 \text{ lbs.}}{\text{inch}^2}$ =43,200 lbs.
Commercial Grade Panel - 26 gauge
36"x.019 (26 ga.) x $\frac{30{,}000 \text{ lbs.}}{\text{inch}^2}$=20,520 lbs.
The Difference:
$\frac{43{,}200 \text{ lbs.}}{20{,}520 \text{ lbs.}} = 2.105 = 110.5\%$

In this example the thinner panel in a higher grade is 110% greater tensile strength. Therefore it is important to consider the tensile strength along with gauge when choosing metal.

Another note on metal is that it is a better first line of defense against fire than many other choices. If the client wants a different type of roofing or siding, it is best to check out its fire rating along with expected longevity and inform the client of your findings so they can make an informed decision.

Metal Coatings

The metal coating protects the metal while providing an aesthetic. Three of the most common metal coatings include polyester, siliconized modified polyester (SMP) and PVDF (polyvinylidene fluoride). As the industry strove to find the solution to fading, chalking, and weatherization, these coatings were developed. Each is considered to be an improvement upon the last with price tags to match. However, that is not the whole story.

All coatings are composed of three things, pigment, resin, and additives. Resin uses the additives to adhere to the pigment, thereby encasing and protecting the pigment. Polyester provides a hard surface and protection from weatherization and is considered to be a good choice for a metal coating that can last up to twenty years. SMP adds silicone to the mix which inhibits chalking and creates a better choice that can include a warranty up to 30 years. PVDF contains alternating carbon-hydrogen and carbon-fluorine bonds giving this coating great resistance to UV exposure, extreme temperatures, humidity, and oxidation, and it ensures the color remains bright and sharp, losing only five Hunter units over 35 years. This is superior fade resistance.

SMP creates a harder finish, so it is the stronger candidate in the impact resistance category. However, if the focus is on color retention, the PVDF coating is better.

Insulation and Vents

Investing in quality insulation that makes sense for the climate can be an important factor in the life of post-frame buildings; it keeps the temperature more stable, avoiding the freeze thaw cycle and helps prevent moisture which can lead to mold and mildew forming. Some insulation will end up settling and flattening out. Rigid board or spray foam are considered good choices as they can help prevent moisture problems. Reflective insulation can assist in keeping excessive heat out.

In addition to the insulation, try to ensure that all wall spaces around doors and windows, anywhere that air could get through, are caulked or weather stripped. When it comes to the roof, however, air flow is important.

As in the case of insulation, vents in the ridgeline, at the eaves, or perhaps at the gables, should be installed to avoid moisture problems which can lead to decaying walls. Since hot air rises, it will carry excess moisture out through the vents in the ridgeline and cooler air will be pulled in through the eave vents.

If you are using the building for certain activities, you will need more ventilation than the passive system outlined above. These include:

- Frequent washing of equipment
- Storing items that off-gas such as chemicals, fertilizer or other substances that off-gas.
- Chemical Usage, including spray paint, high-strength cleaning materials, or other strong chemicals.
- Housing animals; they will breathe, sweat, and create waste, all of which raise the moisture level.
- Living space requires extra ventilation. Building codes will specify what is required.
- A person or people spending a lot of time in the building requires further venting.
- Curing new concrete.

If you need more ventilation, a larger passive ventilation system can be used or a powered ventilation option. There are open ridge vents, vented cupolas, or RV-35 and RV-100 ridge vents. Powered options include attic fans or ventilators, power vented cupolas, exhaust fans, or air exchangers.

More and More People Want Buildings That Will Last

The material tips for longevity that we have considered are largely dependent on the proposed use of the building, as well as the climate, and in some cases the soil type and condition.

It is likely that you can find more ways to increase the expected longevity of your buildings. Doing what you can to improve longevity as well as offering upgrades can improve your status with customers who are not looking for "temporary buildings". ***FBN***

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Post-Frame Churches

The Canaan Bridge Church. PHOTO COURTESY OF WALTERS BUILDINGS

How to Add this Market to Your Customer List

By Linda Schmid

As post-frame grows in the residential market in the form of barndominiums, the same thing is happening in the church market. This pivot in building methods on the part of church congregations is largely for the same reasons that homeowners often choose post-frame; it is more affordable, low maintenance, and it offers the great open space desired in a church. Further, with wide wall cavities for insulation, these buildings can be very energy efficient saving the congregation money over the long term.

How can you put this knowledge to work for you? Tom Wondra of Walter Buildings has some tips to help builders sell post-frame to church boards. Builders also have some lovely church builds to share.

The Canaan Bridge Church

When the congregation of Canaan Bridge Church—known locally as The Bridge Church—outgrew its original country sanctuary, they faced a familiar dilemma: how to fund, design, and build a worship space large enough for a growing ministry without compromising the stewardship values that guide every church dollar. Their answer arrived through a partnership with Walters Buildings led by Regional Vice President Johnie Baker: a 120' × 60' post-frame addition seamlessly joined to a refreshed original structure. The result is a light-filled worship center with offices, nursery, generous lobby, men's and women's restrooms, and a welcoming

The Canaan Bridge Church, Fairfield, Illinois. PHOTO COURTESY OF WALTERS BUILDINGS

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gabled entrance with canopy—all clad in Walters' burgundy and gray steel panels.

Details
Builder: Walters Buildings
Doors: Plyco Series 20
Fasteners: Maze Nails and ST Fastening
Building Manufacturer:
Walters Buildings

Miller Chapel

Miller Chapel in Maynardville, Tennessee, received a beautiful new roof, installed by FLOW Roofing using quality materials from True Metal Supply. The 4,200-square-foot project features 29-gauge Brown Tuff-Rib metal roofing finished with Sherwin-Williams' WeatherXL coil coating, providing exceptional durability and long-lasting color. This new roof not only enhances the chapel's appearance but also provides strength and weather resistance.

The Miller Chapel. *COURTESY OF TRUE METAL SUPPLY*

Details

- Geocel Metal Roofing Sealant
- Brown, 29ga Tuff-Rib Metal Roofing from True Metal Supply
- WeatherXL Coil Coating from Sherwin Williams Coil Coatings
- WoodUltimate® Fasteners Manufactured by Atlas Bolt & Screw
- HydraSell Max Synthetic Underlayment from Marco Industries
- Inside and Outside Closures from Marco Industries

Salem Baptist Church

Salem Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee, recently added a special feature to their ministry outreach—a "Blessing Booth," a small structure where community members can take items they need, much like a goodwill box. True Metal Supply donated the roofing materials for the 4' x 3' booth, which was expertly installed by Abba Professional Craftsman. The roof features True Metal Supply's 29-gauge Burnished Slate Tuff-Rib metal roofing panels, providing a durable, weather-resistant covering that will protect the booth and its contents for years to come. This project is a true example of community care in action—combining donated materials, skilled craftsmanship, and a heartfelt mission to help others. The result is a sturdy, attractive booth that will stand as a symbol of generosity and compassion, serving as a blessing to the neighborhood day after day. **FBN**

The Salem Baptist Church's Blessing Booth. *COURTESY OF TRUE METAL SUPPLY*

Presenting to the Church Board

By Tom Wondra, Walters Buildings

1. Speak their language.

Church boards don't think in square-foot costs alone; they think in decades of ministry impact. Open every conversation by framing post-frame construction as a stewardship tool: lower up-front cost, shorter build time, and reduced long-term maintenance free up resources for outreach.

2. Highlight the familiar.

In a farm-centric territory, most board members already trust post-frame for equipment sheds and ag shops. Invite these groups to imagine that same durability – upgraded in finish and fit – for fellowship halls or sanctuaries.

3. Demonstrate versatility.

Clear-span trusses mean today's sanctuary can become tomorrow's family-life center or gym without knocking out load-bearing walls. We bring renderings that show Sunday-school rooms flexing into youth spaces, and lobbies converting to community event venues.

4. Underscore craftsmanship.

A church is a landmark, not a barn. We showcase studies and thoughtful architectural touches, such as an inviting gabled entrance with a covered canopy, clean modern lines, and interior lighting that transforms the clear-span sanctuary – proving that post-frame can look every bit as "church-worthy" as conventional brick-and-mortar.

Sometimes, even when you use these techniques in your pitch, it can be a tough sell. That is until the numbers and the visuals are lined up.

A steel-frame or conventional stick-build of comparable size often runs 20-30% higher and takes months longer. Present side-by-side budgets and schedules, showing immediate value.

5. Present worship-ready aesthetics.

As one board member said, "Just don't let it look like a hog building."

High-definition renderings, finished project tours, and interior photos (especially something dramatic like the Bridge Church's stage flanked by dual projection screens and a 20-foot cross) dispel that worry in seconds.

Local involvement can also help. If one of your crew is an active congregation member, and the Board knows he/she will be pouring personal labor into the project it builds trust faster than any brochure ever could. **FBN**

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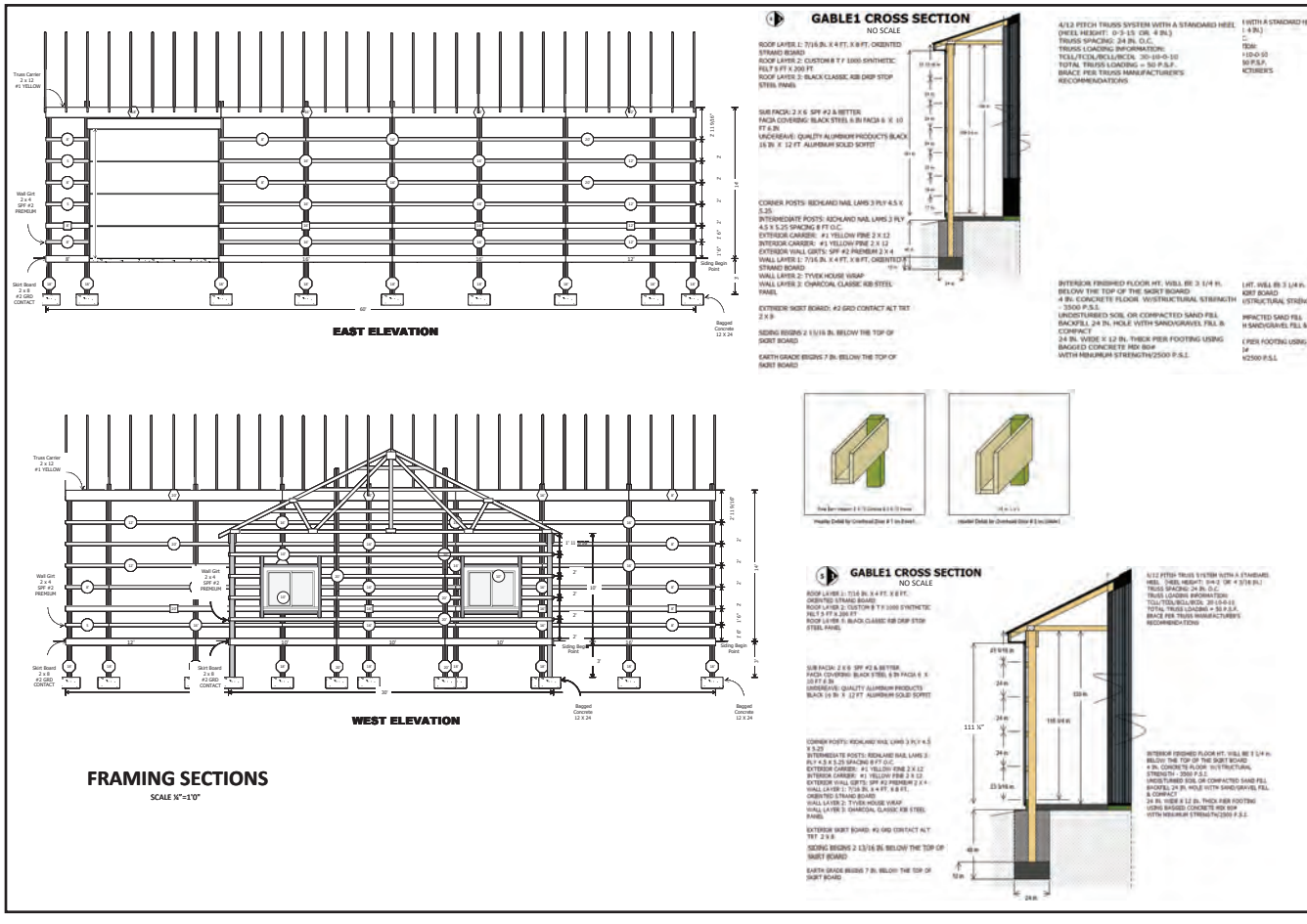
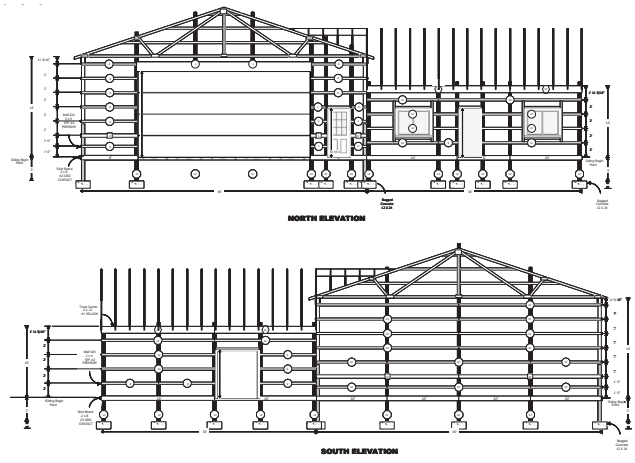
Post-Frame Software

What Can It Do For You?

By Linda Schmid





Examples of the documentation generated by Construction Maestro.
COURTESY OF SYMUN SYSTEMS

Post-frame construction has been around for many years, often employed by farmers for their own use and builders for agricultural sheds and barns. For most of that time, there were no handy visualizers to help builders sell their services to customers. The customer stipulated what they wanted, and the builder hand-drew it and figured out what he needed to build it. He added up all the component costs, added labor costs, and finally he had an estimate for the customer. It seems simple and straight-forward until you realize that with the next estimate, the builder had to start the whole process again from scratch, spending several hours generating each

estimate and proposal. Meanwhile other proposal requests piled up. On top of that, many of these prospective customers went with a competitor, possibly one who got back to them sooner. Eliminating the wait time for the customer helps many builders to make the sale. Let's consider the features and benefits of some of the leading software available for design and estimation.

Construction Maestro

Design and Visualizer

This computer-based software (internet not required) from Symun Systems [https://www.symun.com/] helps the builder design a building in a fraction of the time. The builder can customize the building with numerous options including customized post spacing, varied roof pitches; and gable, gambrel, scissors, or steel truss systems. The intuitive, step-by-step interface makes buildings easy to design along with follow-up changes. The software also allows for the easy creation of multiple designs of the same building with the estimate copy feature. The visualizer draws two 3D perspective views, from one side then the other, and 2D vector images, avoiding pixelated likenesses.

Estimates

The software then produces the estimate based on what the builder specifies for materials. The software comes with 77 metal companies' products pre-loaded. Pricing can be updated quickly in Maestro using the spreadsheet provided in the software to send to the builder's supplier. The builder can select very specifically what they want, the brand, style, size and color of metal panel, for example. Just recently, roll-up doors from DBCI and Trac-Rite have been added to the vendor list. If a builder prefers, they can specify a supplier that is not pre-loaded in the software. Construction Maestro has a fully dynamic product setup feature that allows the user to add, update, or delete products they do not use.

Documentation

The software produces over twenty types of documentation for each project, including pull lists, component layouts, and a product order to email to the vendor. The document package includes:

- Quotation Page
- Categorized Materials List
- Materials Pull List
- Pole Layout/Floor Plan
- Wall Girt/Stud Frame Views
- Labeled Cut List
- Plywood Layout
- Purlin/Truss Layout
- Steel Wall Layout
- Steel Roof Layout
- Steel Report
- Steel Order Form

- Steel Panel Gable Detail
- Steel Component/Application Details
- Multiple Cross Section Details
- 3D Renderings
- Final Elevation Views
- Overhang Detail
- Header Details
- View and Print Imported Truss Drawings Provided by Truss Company
- Cover Sheet

Examples of the Construction Maestro 6.0 visualizer. COURTESY OF SYMUN SYSTEMS

Templates

Templates are a powerful feature that allow the user to pre-load the specs of a building design to save time, including commonly used components to minimize the number of selections for a given estimate. Templates aren't pre-loaded in the software as the selections are builder specific. However, they are easy to create. Estimates are easy to create but even easier and faster when made from a template said Mike Rinks, co-owner of Symun Systems, Inc.

Building Inspectors and Engineers

The drawings created by Construction Maestro make it easy for building inspectors to review. They include multiple views such as the post layout, wall girt and roof purlin layouts, 2D final elevations, several 3D views of the finished building, multiple cross-sections, an overhang detail, and door header details.

If the project needs to be approved by an engineer, the user can click on a button in Construction Maestro® and the pertinent drawings are forwarded to Timber Tech Engineering for review and they will receive a quote for services requested.

Efficiencies

One of the reasons so many people like post-frame construction is because of the efficiencies it creates, and this software contributes to those efficiencies in respect to time, labor, and more.

"Construction Maestro is also a software choice that fits in well with the economy of the post-frame industry," Rinks said.

Options

There are a number of options or add-ons that customers can choose from.

- Maestro Plotter Module™ add-on is an enhanced visual drawing tool that gives users the ability to do things like scale and arrange drawings on large format paper 11" x 17", D size, or E size, add custom CAD to the plans, save plans in PDF format, and the ability to export them in DXF format.
- The Maestro 360™ add-on for Sketch-Up Pro users automates a 3D design created in Construction Maestro® in the click of a button. The user can rotate the 3D model from any angle and save the image in several different file formats.
- MaestroNet™ is an upcoming option. This web-based 3D visualizer will be a tool that users can make accessible to their customers, allowing them to design a building online and submit for a quote. The Construction Maestro® user can then import the web designed project to generate a full set of plans along with the cost of the package.

Learning Curve

Historically, people who have worked with computer programs in the past learn the system pretty easily; with perhaps a day of training they are off and running. Others who are less experienced may also learn by watching training videos provided by Symun Systems, Inc., or call their USA-based tech support for assistance.

Brian Secor, President/Managing Partner of Secor Building Solutions, a design and build company that has been using Maestro since 2021, said that any building program has a bit of a learning curve; there is no substitute for time. However, the price import tool cuts out a lot of time in database management, and that is a huge advantage that more than makes up for the learning time.

Secor went on to say that they want MaestroNet™ for their customers. "The system creates such efficiency, we will likely want anything that Construction Maestro develops," he said.

On the Horizon

The newest edition of the software, Construction Maestro® Encore Version 6.0, will be released soon and it will bring users a new functionality.

SmartBuild Systems

Design and Visualizer

Licensed per user, the SmartBuild Systems [https://smartbuildsystems.com/] web-based design program can be accessed from any computer. Many companies have only one license; others have many, depending on how they are using the

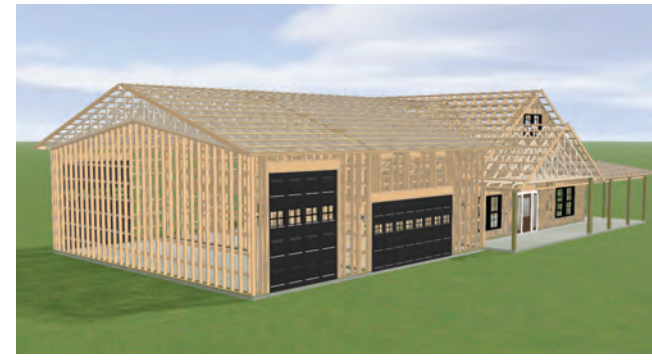
program.

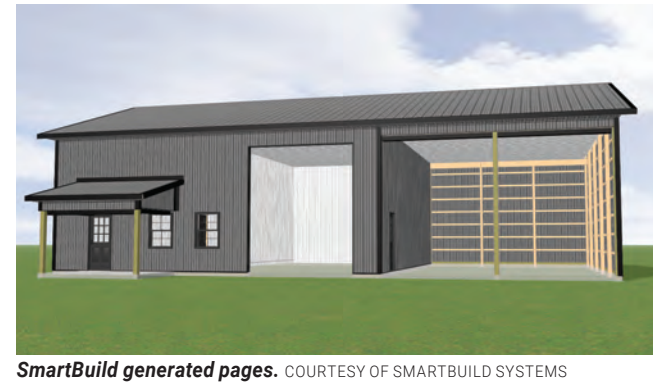
The software helps customers, builders, and engineers generate the basic drawings including foundation, columns with dimensions, and squaring information for layout to dig holes. CAD files are available to hand to the engineer allowing them to zoom in and out and see the first level of the house and the interior. The program can help a person create a complex design, which can include varied roof pitches, custom spacing of columns, and more in about twenty-five minutes. At output, a 3D dimensional Sketch-up file can be generated. If you export the file to SketchUp architectural and interior design software, you can add details like appliances, cars, and furniture, and create a very realistic visual.

SmartBuild will tell the builder what they need in order to build their project, however, if a project requires an engineer's seal, as city hall often stipulates, the plan must be referred to an engineer.

Estimator

The estimation tool is based on the database that the builder loads into the software. The inventory and pricing are entered in the database, either based on a supplier's numbering system or a numbering system the builder develops. This project can seem daunting to some builders, but a SmartBuild representative assists customers in accomplishing the database setup.





SmartBuild generated pages. COURTESY OF SMARTBUILD SYSTEMS

The documents that SmartBuild prints are:

- 3D Model — fully rotatable, realistic renderings of the building.
- 2D Elevations & Floor Plans — scaled drawings showing layout and exterior views.
- Perspective Views — for sales presentations and client approvals.
- Framing Layouts — post, purlin, girt, and truss placement drawings.
- Roof Plans — including slope, pitch, and truss/rafter details.
- Wall Layouts — stud, girt, and opening locations with dimensions.
- Detailed Cross-Sections — showing connections, dimensions, and materials.
- CAD Export Files — typically DWG and/or DXF, compatible with AutoCAD and other CAD programs.
- PDF Construction Drawings — for print or jobsite use.
- Material Takeoffs (Cut Lists) — every board, panel, and trim piece with dimensions.
- Bill of Materials (BOM) — organized list of all required materials, quantities, and specs.
- Pricing/Quoting Sheets — linked directly to material data for sales proposals.
- Purchase Orders — pre-formatted for suppliers, based on the BOM.
- Truss and Component Layouts — for prefabrication.
- Panel/Sheeting Layouts — cut diagrams for metal roofing and siding panels.
- CNC/Shop-Ready Files (for some integrations) — can feed directly into saws or roll formers.

Licensed Suppliers

If a builder's suppliers are licensed users of SmartBuild, it simplifies things. For example, Graber Post is a licensed supplier. In fact, they have been working with the program before it even came onto the market — they were one of the product testers. Naturally when it went live in 2019, they bought a license. Now they have many licenses and their builders can access the software and their products through their license. This eliminates the need for builders to generate their own inventory numbers, and they have no price changes to make. The database is automatically updated by their supplier.

Learning to Use the Program

Like most computer software, it takes a little time to get used to the program and learn to use it proficiently. Initially, field reps help the customer get up and running. Usually within a few months contractors are using the program without giving it a second thought.

"SmartBuild makes builders' lives easier," said Delmar Wagler, Tech Support for SmartBuild users at Graber Post. "Some people who are hesitant about trying something new at first but go ahead and make the change come back a year later and say, 'I don't know what I did before SmartBuild.'"

Wagler went on to say that if builders visit prospective customers and build a building together in the visualizer, then print out the quote and drawings, it can help the builder make the sale because it's all available immediately.

Computer Talk

This software can work with other programs to further streamline processes. An API app interface allows it to connect to and support accounting programs, rendering programs, or CRMs (Customer Relationship Management systems).

Into the Future

SmartBuild undergoes constant renovations; they come out with updates every four to six weeks, and Keith Dietzen of SmartBuild said he has a development team working to improve the program based on customer requests. ***FBN***

Paradigm-ERP System

An ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system ties together many disparate functions in a business, thereby ensuring that all of the departments involved have access to data – and that they all have the same data. This way, departments can more easily speak to each other and make decisions. Paradigm is one such system .

Paradigm was originally an ERP System customized for the roll-forming industry. However, the team at Paradigm saw that many contractors were working from a basic CRM, Quickbook, and various spread sheets, so they decided they needed to offer software to work for the industry adjacent to their roll-forming market: post-frame building. Now contractors can replace these fragmented forms of information to combine them into a single, centralized system.

The software provides CRM (Customer Relationship Management), job management, job costing, and inventory management; it's a complete system for the hub of their operations. The program has no visualization tool, so they have teamed up with SmartBuild Systems. After the contractor creates a building in the visualizer, and the material list and proposal have been generated, they can be imported into Paradigm and tracked there. Then the invoicing, accounting, and pre-sales are handled for the contractor. There is a module to connect builders with suppliers and the ordering process runs very smoothly.

Anthony Martin, Manager at Paragon Computing Solutions [https://goparagon.com/], the developers of Paradigm software said, "This system is not sold as a plug and play; it takes some implementation. If a customer wants to use it to its full extent, it will replace their old accounting system and other systems they have in place. We work with the customer on getting the program set up and ready to go."

Some of their customers are both roll formers and contractors in post-frame. In that case, they can choose either focus, but they are not locked out of features from the other program; they can add the modules needed. ***FBN***

Simpson Strong-Tie Donates $30,000 for Texas Flood Relief

Simpson Strong-Tie has donated $30,000 to the Kerr County Flood Relief Fund following the destructive floods in Texas on July 4, 2025. Kerr County was one of the hardest-hit areas around the Guadalupe River, where the unprecedented flash flooding has tragically claimed at least 120 lives with scores of others injured or missing.

Operated by the Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country, a 501(c)(3) public charity, the Kerr County Flood Relief Fund is supporting relief efforts and long-term rebuilding in impacted communities including Boerne, Hunt, Ingram, Kerrville, Center Point and Comfort. The organization will be distributing grants to nonprofit organizations, first responder agencies and local governments actively involved in response, relief and recovery.

"We are devastated for the people of Texas, and our thoughts are with all the families who've lost loved ones," said Simpson Strong-Tie President and CEO Mike Olosky. "As the region continues search-and-rescue efforts, begins to recover and looks ahead to rebuilding, we're grateful to the local organizations supporting affected communities."

Along with the initial donation, Simpson Strong-Tie is matching employee donations up to $5,000 per year.

This contribution reflects the company's ongoing commitment to aid in disaster relief and recovery efforts around the world. To learn more about Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country, visit www.communityfoundation.net.

AXCS Equipment Appoints Group Product Manager

AXCS Equipment (Hy-Brid Lifts), a leader in aerial lift equipment, announces Paul Michaels as the company's new group product manager. One of Michaels' primary responsibilities will be to work on the development and deployment of the company's new and expanding product portfolio. He will be responsible for overall customer experience and product strategy by translating market needs and determining how both legacy and AXCS Equipment products ideally exceed market expectations in each segment to fulfill customer requirements.

"AXCS Equipment has an amazing growth outlook, with plans to add a significant number of new aerial products in the coming years," Michaels said. "Safety and quality are two of our core principles and that will be a primary focus as we roll out these new products. We want to ensure that not only can customers safely use our products, but that they're also benefiting from equipment that provides world-class quality."

As group product manager, Michaels will deploy the AXCS Equipment product portfolio strategy, which entails the existing portfolio and new product categories including larger-capacity scissor lifts, vertical mast lifts, articulated booms, telehandlers and other products.

Michaels brings 25-plus years of product management experience to his new role. In each of his previous roles, he developed product strategies and solutions to make equipment more innovative, safer and more efficient.

"Paul's established record of enhancing brands will be a great asset to the AXCS Equipment team and will directly benefit our customers," said Eric Liner, CEO of AXCS Equipment. "His strategic approach to product management will be valuable in growing our new brand identity and our expanding product offering. There are big happenings on the horizon for AXCS Equipment and Paul's role will be largely connected to helping shape our future." ***FBN***

BY SCOTT TAPPA

Talking the Talk

Communicating effectively with customers is crucial for builders

20 YEARS AGO IN FRAME BUILDING NEWS

This Flashback article was originally published 20 years ago, in the November 2005 edition of Frame Building News. It was written by then-editor Scott Tappa. It encourages builders to ditch the jargon, meet customers at their level of understanding, and keep communication clear and consistent to build trust and avoid headaches down the road.

If you have additional advice about effective communication that you'd like to share with readers, send it to karen@shieldwallmedia.com.

The post-frame building industry has its own charming nomenclature, one that should be familiar to anyone reading *Frame Building News*.

Southern Yellow Pine 6x6 posts pressure-treated with CCA to 0.60 pcf retention. Siliconized modified polyester coil coatings with 30-year film integrity warranty. G-90, 29-gauge corrugated steel panels with 36-inch coverage and 3/4-inch ribs 9 inches on center.

Easy enough for you to understand, right? But to an average post-frame building customer, such terminology may as well be spoken in Russian — they just don't understand what it all means.

Customers need not know the Post-Frame Building Design Manual like the back of their hand, but they should have a basic understanding of what will be going into their buildings. Making sure this happens is not just good customer service, but also a first line of defense against problem customers.

"There's an old saying that an attorney told me years ago: 'Educate before litigate,'" says Mike Lemke, a Valparaiso, Ind., builder.

Sizing them up

"We try to give as much information as possible to educate the customer, so they can make their own interpretation of it, then wait for questions," says Lemke. "We break it down in the simplest, easiest-to-understand way possible, and if they still have that deer-in-headlights look, we break it down even simpler."

Sizing up the customer, and the level of detail with which they may be comfortable, is the first step toward ensuring effective communication. "We try to determine first what personality type we're talking to, and how analytical they are," says John Warriner of Illini FS. "From there we determine what kind of language we use. If we've got a guy who loves detail, you can probably get down to specific terms; if not, you try to talk in more general terms. In some cases, they're just concerned with what the finished project is going to look like, not whether we're using a 2x4 or 2x6."

Dealing with customers who know the language already can make the sales process much easier for a builder — or much harder. Some customers know just enough about post-frame building to be dangerous, says Tom Bradley of Parco Building Systems in Newfane, N.Y.

"That's the scary guy," Bradley says with a laugh. "It's not that they know enough, it's that they think they know enough. We do it for a living."

McLennan Construction of Holden, Mo., also runs into such customers. "That's OK, I don't mind being questioned — the more they know, the less problem I have selling them a good building," says John McLennan. "Unless they're being a smart aleck! A lot of our competition is from Arkansas or Oklahoma, and they don't have the foggiest idea about wood, they know how to build one building, and it costs less. So the more customers know, the quicker they understand why ours is better."

A certain degree of accommodation also works. Lemke says his Design Construction of NWI will not override a customer with strong opinions on what they want. "You always have to make the customer happy," he says. "If they are very strong in one direction, you give them what they want or you don't get the job.

They're making their own mind up. All we're doing is giving people what they want."

While a builder has to retain the role of expert on any given project, a little humility comes in handy. DeKalb, Ill., builder Jim Zenz has dealt with customers who work in the steel industry and know the ins and outs of local companies' light-gauge panel offerings, and deferred to their expertise. "They'll tell me, 'Morton's running this,'" he says. "They know more than I do. They know a lot of the fine details on the process of preparing a sheet of steel. I guess my thing is I don't act like I know more about it than they do. You've got to give them their respect."

Keeping it simple

Yet few post-frame building customers are steel industry experts. From all accounts, the detail people are in the minority. "It seems that more often than not we don't have people getting real technical about that, maybe even less so than it used to be," says Zenz. "Some of that is because of the nature of our business — 80 percent of our work is referrals, and most people are familiar with our product. They know what we use for framing materials."

"If you've got a person who's not very detail-oriented, normally they're more interested in how the finished product is going to look, how it will fit into the location," says Warriner. "Some of the things like paint warranties and that kind of stuff become a little more particular to them, and we'll talk about differences between products, but you may not have to convey as much technical information."

Sometimes even the most end result-oriented customer would like to know a little more about the materials going into their new building. After all, post-frame jargon does not always make perfect sense. "One thing a lot of people don't understand is the fact that 26-gauge is thicker than 29-gauge," says Zenz. "So a lot of times instead of talking in gauges, we'll talk in terms of actual thickness, they can understand that a little better. A lot of people are interested in snow load, what is a 30-pound snow load, how much snow is that? We usually tell them that's what most commercial loads in our area are, and they're content knowing that."

The National Frame Builders Association has brochures and other marketing materials that can help illustrate tricky concepts to customers. Trade magazines can help, says Lemke, who often copies articles from such publications and passes them along to customers.

"Talking the Talk" was originally published in the November 2005 edition of Frame Building News.

No matter what level of detail you get into with a customer, the end result needs to be driven home: wood treated to 0.60 retention is X percent more effective than

wood treated to 0.40 retention, screws have X percent more resistance to pullout than nails, etc. "No matter what the product line, it's the old feature and benefit thing," says Warriner. "You can give customers all the features in the world, but they have to understand the benefits. There's always that chance that the customer thinks he understands what it all means, and he might not."

Spelling things out

Such confusion can potentially leave a bad taste in customers' mouths at the conclusion of a seemingly routine project. The builders surveyed for this story say this type of miscommunication does not happen often, and with good reason: they have procedures in place to ensure customers know what they're getting every step of the way.

For Parco Building Systems, that means signing sheet upon sheet upon sheet, creating a paper trail that leaves no questions about materials or responsibilities.

"Our contract goes over every portion of framing, to steel, to fasteners, to closures, to site and underground obstacle considerations," says Bradley. "We do 300, 400 buildings a year, and at that pace, you have to have it in writing."

Even then, surprises inevitably arise during the construction process. Constant communication and immediate attention help ensure everyone is happy at the end of the project. "We've learned over the years to deal with things as they're happening," says Lemke. "We do as many walk-throughs as possible during the process. If a customer says, 'That's not what I wanted,' we back up, go to the plans."

Unfortunately, every builder has run into a customer who uses "That's not what I wanted" as a bargaining chip to reduce or avoid their final payments. "Ninety percent of the time when you have a guy like that, you're in constant negotiation," says Bradley, who is currently dealing with five such customers. "You have to determine if he is honestly feeling this, or does he not want to pay me? Over time you develop an eye for who the guy is who's trying to put the screws to you versus the guy who honestly thinks he's been shorted."

Taking it mobile

Modern technologies available to post-frame builders have both enhanced and diminished the quality of communication with customers. Cell phones, e-mail, and the Internet have all made communicating easier, but more does not always mean better.

Take cell phones. Everyone has one nowadays, and they have virtually eliminated any barriers for reaching a builder at a jobsite. They also have made time spent in the truck more productive. "I spend quite a bit of time on my cell phone when I'm on the road," says Zenz. "I have a list of all our past and current customers waiting to do work with us, and it gives me an opportunity to touch base with them. I've found having a cell phone really helpful as far as customer relations. I'd be lost without it."

Conversely, builders can't control when their phone might start ringing. "They always seem to catch you when you've got a tool apron on, swinging from a truss," says Lemke. "You're not going to remember what they say. So we tell them to write their questions down, fax it to the office, and we'll answer it in a timely fashion. It eliminates errors."

The Internet is an effective tool for educating customers on their own time, says John Hayworth. The Valley Falls, Kan., builder often steers clients to manufacturers' Web sites before they reach a final decision. "I like the fact they can get on the Internet and look up products, they can gain knowledge by studying themselves," he says. "Some people want to know a lot, so they can go to a manufacturer's Web site, and tell me what they think."

Warriner says Ilini FS is using e-mail more and more, especially for internal communication. "We're spread out over a pretty good mileage, our salespeople and operations people don't necessarily cross paths every day," he says. "We're trying to use e-mail more, use digital cameras more to convey information. If we're working on a building and have an issue, or if we're trying to price something, we try to use digital imagery. We're getting better at it, but probably not where we need to be."

But for quality communication, nothing can beat face to face. "I tracked for awhile how many jobs we got over the phone and how many we got where we went and talked to the customer, and it's an amazing difference," says McLennan. "I prefer to meet people face to face, spend time with them. Part of it is the explanation, part of it is gaining trust." ***FBN***

FastenMaster HeadLOK Structural Wood Screws

FastenMaster, a manufacturer of fastening solutions for decking and wood-to-wood construction, introduces its popular HeadLOK Structural Wood Screws now improved with the TORX® ttap® Drive System for enhanced installation performance.

TORX ttap is a premium drive system, which combines the ease of a TORX drive with a patented ttap stability button. This design provides superior bit engagement for a stable, wobble-free installation, while preventing fastener strip-out during installation. The drive system is also compatible with standard TORX T30 drive bits.

HeadLOK fasteners feature a large flat head design with chamfer for increased strength, a sharp point for faster installation, aggressive thread design for maximum engagement and holding strength, and a 3/16" diameter shank that offers higher design shear than 3/8" lag screws. Common applications include use in decks, fences, headers, stairs, ridged foam, cabinet installation, and many other wood-to-wood applications.

HeadLOK fasteners are available in lengths of 2-7/8", 4-1/2", 6", 8" and 10", with additional lengths available for special order. A T30 ttap bit is included in each package.

FastenMaster, a division of OMG Building Products, LLC, is a brand of fastening solutions for professional contractors that was established in 1981. Its products are engineered for structural, decking, and trim applications in residential construction, and its product line includes the LOK Line of structural wood screws, Tiger Claw Hidden Deck Clip System, as well as Cortex Hidden Fastening System for deck and trim applications.

www.FastenMaster.com

Trac-Rite "Renew-Rite"

Trac-Rite has announced the launch of Renew-Rite, a new product and service line created in partnership with Accent Building Restoration, Inc. (ABR). This collaboration brings self-storage owners and operators a turnkey solution to repair, modernize, and revitalize aging and damaged facilities—combining Trac-Rite's industry-leading roll-up doors, hallway systems and metal fabrication capabilities with ABR's expert renovation services in all 50 states.

Renew-Rite is designed to help owners refresh their facilities with best-in-class, 100% American-made roll-up doors and metal building components—including jambs, headers, and other commonly replaced components—while also enhancing unit size, layout efficiency, and overall curb appeal. The program offers more than just doors; it's a full-service solution to revitalize your self-storage property.

"This partnership with ABR brings together two companies that share a dedication to quality and service," said Kellen Anderson, Director of Sales for Trac-Rite. "Renew-Rite gives facility owners a streamlined way to replace outdated or damaged doors, improve security, and maximize their rentable space & increase rental income—all backed by our reliable, 100% American-made products and ABR's trusted installation team."

Built with strength, longevity, and style in mind, Trac-Rite doors are manufactured from durable American steel and backed by an industry-leading warranty. As a 100% employee-owned company, Trac-Rite is proud to work alongside ABR to deliver long-lasting solutions that protect and elevate self-storage owners' investments.

"Having a trusted, proven door manufacturer like Trac-Rite as our partner means we can confidently deliver exceptional results to our clients," said Jon Fawcett, President at ABR. "Together, we're offering a full-service solution that doesn't just improve appearance, it adds long-term value and operational efficiency to every property."

www.tracrite.com

Central States Sentry™ Wind-Rated Model 7500 Roll-Up Door

Central States Manufacturing announces a new addition to its roll door product line. The Central States Sentry™ model 7500 wind-rated roll-up door joins the 6500 door offering announced earlier this year.

The Sentry 7500 wind-rated roll-up door features innovations that provide benefits for both end users and installers:

• It is designed to withstand the demanding wind loads of the coastal regions of the United States according to stringent ASTM E330 standards. The high-carbon galvanized steel alloy springs are fully coated prior to forming to ensure 100% corrosion protection. They are manufactured to ASTM A228 standards, which outperforms traditional oil-tempered springs in fatigue, shear, and tensile strength tests. The springs do not require greasing to ensure long service life. The superior 26-gauge, double-seamed curtain is durable and more resistant to environmental damage. The Sentry 7500 model includes additional fastening locations and 12-gauge wind clips as necessary to aid in wind load resistance.

• The Sentry 7500 door can be ordered, delivered, and installed with wind clips that add an extra layer of security. The stainless-steel latches accept all commercial key locks and padlocks, with an available punch pattern that integrates with various Bluetooth® latches in the market.

• The slotted system does not require bolts to affix the door to the guide. The bracket and latch are factory installed and the hardware is unit packed and does not require sorting on the job site. Same-sized fasteners require fewer tools

• The standard 32-color options include perfect matches of popular industry colors and has up to a 40-year limited warranty.

• An aluminum-extruded bottom bar with bulb astragal avoids rust, extending the door's life while providing a lighter touch.

www.centralstatesco.com

FBN

BY MIKE MOMB, HANSEN POLE BUILDINGS

Mold In Post-Frame Construction

Causes, Prevention, and Mitigation

My family happens to like strawberries. Every week we will eat two to four pounds of them. Our challenge is shopping for them, where we must closely examine carton after carton to find ones free of white fluffy cotton candy looking stuff ... mold.

Mold is a type of fungus thriving in moist environments, both indoors and outdoors. It appears as fuzzy, slimy, or powdery patches in various colors, including green, white, black, or even pink. Mold plays a crucial role in nature by decomposing dead organic matter, but indoors, it can cause significant problems, including health issues and property damage.

Mold reproduces by producing tiny spores easily spread through air. These spores require moisture and organic material to grow. While many molds are harmless, some can produce mycotoxins. These may lead to allergic reactions, respiratory problems, and other health issues, especially in sensitive individuals.

Mold in post-frame construction typically arises from a combination of moisture, inadequate ventilation, and organic materials providing nutrients for mold growth. Here are main causes:

1. Moisture Accumulation: Mold thrives in damp environments. Common sources of moisture include:

- Leaking roofs, walls, or windows.
- High humidity levels within building.
- Condensation on surfaces, especially in poorly insulated areas.

2. Inadequate Ventilation: Proper airflow is crucial to prevent moisture buildup. Without sufficient ventilation, humid air can become trapped, creating ideal conditions for mold to flourish. This is particularly important in attics and crawl spaces.

NSKYR2-STOCK.ADOBE.COM

3. Organic Materials: Mold feeds on organic materials found in construction, such as wood and certain types of insulation. If these materials are wet or damp, they can become breeding grounds for mold.

4. Poor Construction Practices: Using wet or moldy lumber during construction can introduce mold spores into buildings. Additionally, improper sealing or installation of roofing, siding and windows can lead to leaks and moisture intrusion.

Proper planning can assist in minimizing potential of increased moisture and humidity within post-frame buildings.

Way back in my post-frame building contractor days (before the turn into this century) we thought nothing of pouring concrete slabs on grade without a vapor barrier below. Concrete is inherently porous, meaning it contains tiny voids allowing water and other substances to permeate through it. Think of concrete as being a very heavy sponge.

United States requirements for vapor barriers under concrete slabs are primarily outlined in 2021's International Residential Code (IRC). Here are key IRC points, specifically Section R506.2.3:

1. Thickness Requirement: Minimum thickness for a vapor retarder has been increased to **10 mils (0.010 inch)**. This change was made to enhance durability and reduce likelihood of punctures during construction.

2. Material Specification: Vapor retarder must be made of polyethylene or another approved material conforming to **ASTM E1745 Class A**.

3. Installation Guidelines:

- Vapor retarder should be placed between base course or subgrade and concrete slab.
- Joints must be lapped by at least six inches and sealed to maintain continuity.[2]

- It is crucial to seal around all penetrations (like pipes and conduits) to prevent moisture migration.

1. Exceptions: A vapor barrier is not required in certain situations, such as:

- Garages and utility buildings.
- Unheated storage rooms under 70 square feet.
- Driveways, patios, and other flatwork not likely to be enclosed later.
- Where local building officials approve based on site conditions.

2. Importance: Proper installation of a vapor barrier is essential to prevent moisture-related issues, such as mold growth and damage to flooring materials. About 40% of concrete slab failures are moisture-related, making adherence to these codes critical.

Vapor barriers are inexpensive and, in this author's humble opinion, should be placed under any slab on grade in an enclosed (or having possible future enclosure) post-frame building.

At time of pour, a cubic yard of concrete typically contains approximately 30 to 40 gallons of water. After pouring concrete, within an enclosed or partially enclosed building, leave doors and windows open to allow moisture leaving the concrete to escape from the building.

Proper site grading is essential for managing water drainage and potentially reducing the moisture entering building.

Grading Guidelines

1. **Slope Away from Foundations**: Ground should be graded to slope away from building foundation at a minimum of 5% (1/2 inch per foot) for 10 feet per 2021 IRC R401.3.
2. **Use of Swales and Drains**: If site is level or slopes toward building, swales can be installed to capture and redirect stormwater. Swales should have a 3:1 width-to-height ratio and a slope of 2% to 4%.
3. **Drainage Systems**: Implementing drainage systems, such as French drains, can effectively manage excess water. These should be installed at least 18 inches below ground and must slope toward an outlet.

At Hansen Pole Buildings, we order only kiln dried lumber, paper wrapped and stored atop concrete. We have found opened units, when loaded on trucks, can develop surface mold within as little as 24 to 48 hours and this is accelerated by high humidity and/or warm temperatures.

Lumber, after delivery on site, can often develop mold. Once the building is enclosed, spraying mold or mildewed lumber with undiluted white vinegar, or a solution of 1 part detergent, 10 parts bleach, 20 parts water and allowing to dry will mitigate most instances.

Certain types of damp insulation can indeed encourage mold growth, primarily due to their material composition and moisture retention properties. Here are the main culprits:

1. **Cellulose Insulation:** This organic material, made from recycled paper, is highly susceptible to mold if it becomes wet. While it is treated to resist mold, its paper content can still provide a food source for mold if moisture is present.
2. **Fiberglass Insulation:** Although fiberglass itself is inorganic and mold-resistant, it can trap organic dust and debris in its fibers. If these fibers become damp, they can create an environment conducive to mold growth.
3. **Mineral Wool Insulation:** Similar to fiberglass, mineral wool is made from inorganic materials but can still support mold growth if it becomes damp. It can trap organic materials mold can feed on.
4. **Open-Cell Spray Foam:** While closed-cell spray foam is resistant to moisture, open-cell foam can absorb water and may harbor mold if it gets wet.

To prevent mold growth, it's crucial to manage moisture levels effectively and choose insulation materials less prone to mold, such as closed-cell spray foam or rigid foam boards.

Modern building practices encourage buildings towards airtightness. A blower door test is a crucial diagnostic tool used to measure airtightness of buildings by quantifying air leakage through a building envelope. This test has become increasingly important due to stricter building codes and rising energy efficiency standards. Here's a quick overview:

What is a Blower Door Test?

- **Purpose:** It measures how much air leaks into or out of a building through unintentional gaps and cracks.
- **Process:** A powerful fan is mounted in an exterior doorway to create a pressure difference, allowing air to flow in through leaks, these can then be measured.

Why is it Important?

- **Energy Savings:** Proper air sealing based on test results can reduce heating and cooling costs by 10-40%. Many air sealing investments pay for themselves within 3-7 years.[1]
- **Building Codes:** Since 2015, blower door testing has been mandatory for new residential construction under International Energy Conservation Codes, with specific air change rate requirements.

How Does it Work?

1. **Setup**: All exterior doors and windows are closed, and blower door is installed.
2. **Testing**: Fan creates a pressure difference (typically 50 Pascals), and air leakage is measured.
3. **Results**: Results are expressed in terms of Air Changes per Hour at 50 Pascals (ACH50), this helps assess building's airtightness.

Benefits of Blower Door Testing

- Identifies areas needing air sealing.
- Helps improve indoor air quality and comfort.
- Assists in determining proper sizing of HVAC systems.

An unintended consequence is overly tight buildings can encourage mold growth. This is primarily due to inadequate ventilation, leading to moisture accumulation indoors. When buildings are tightly sealed, they may trap humidity and moisture from various sources, such as cooking, showering, and even breathing. Without proper airflow, this moisture can create an ideal environment for mold to thrive.

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To prevent mold growth, it's essential to maintain indoor humidity levels below 60% and ensure adequate ventilation throughout the building. This can involve using exhaust fans, opening windows, or employing a well-designed HVAC system to effectively remove moisture from the air.

Even in our own home, we run a dehumidifier from Spring until Fall and target indoor humidity levels at 40%, otherwise we see mold forming on our windowsills.

To mitigate mold growth, it's essential to manage moisture levels, ensure proper ventilation, and use mold-resistant materials when possible. Regular inspections and maintenance can also help identify and address potential issues before they escalate. ***FBN***

Mike Momb *has been Technical Director for Hansen Pole Buildings, LLC of Browns Valley, Minnesota for more than 20 years. His daily post-frame blog, as well as his weekly "Ask the Pole Barn Guru" column can be followed at the company website, www.hansenpolebuildings.com/blog/.*

Further Reading:

[1] *SolarTech, Blower Door Test: Complete Guide to Building Air Leakage Testing (2025), https://solartechonline.com/blog/blower-door-test-guide/*

[2] *The Building Code Forum, https://www.thebuildingcodeforum.com/forum/threads/2021-irc-506-2-3.34389/*

NFBA & Chapter Updates

Closing Out 2025 with Events, Awards, and Industry Highlights

As 2025 winds down, NFBA and the Post-frame Industry Chapters are preparing for a season filled with events, recognition programs, and opportunities to bring members together. From Ohio to Oklahoma, the post-frame industry will be gathering to exchange knowledge, celebrate achievements, and strengthen professional networks.

Buckeye Frame Building Association (Ohio) Annual Expo

The Buckeye Frame Building Association will open the new year with its Annual Expo on Thursday, January 8, 2026. This annual Expo blends education, competition, and fellowship. The Expo will be held at Ashland University's John C. Myers Convocation Center in Ashland, Ohio.

The Expo begins with registration and breakfast at 8:30 a.m., followed by a full day of sessions, contests, and awards with time to visit with Exhibitors built in throughout the day. Highlights include:

- Safety Seminar at 9:30 a.m.
- ActionCoach Business Management session at 11:00 a.m.
- Lunch, Annual Meeting, Buckeye Building Awards, and NFBA Update at 12:30 p.m.
- Keynote presentation by Marvin Montgomery, *Attitude is Everything,* at 2:00 p.m.
- Nail and screw driving contests throughout the day, with cash and prizes awarded at the close of the event.

For more information and a full schedule, visit www.ohiopostframe.org.

Wisconsin Frame Builders Association Annual Conference

The Wisconsin Frame Builders Association will hold its 2026 Annual Conference February 3-4 at the Jefferson Street Inn in Wausau. Full details will be released in the coming months, but attendees can expect a full program of site tours, educational sessions, a Vendor Showcase with tabletop displays, networking opportunities, and updates tailored to Wisconsin's Post-frame industry. Visit www.wisconsinframebuilders.org for more information.

Heartland Chapter Golf Outing

The Heartland Chapter recently hosted a successful golf outing at the Shangri-La Resort in Oklahoma. Builders, manufacturers, and associates participated in a day that combined competition and networking, capped by dinner and prizes. Sponsorship opportunities, golf contests, and a strong turnout underscored the chapter's commitment to fostering industry relationships while advancing the post-frame industry.

NFBA Building of the Year Awards

Applications are being accepted now through December 1st for the 2025 NFBA Building of the Year Awards. The awards feature ten building categories plus a Judges' Award, with builders competing in three divisions—Experts, Masters, and Premier—based on annual gross volume. Categories span the breadth of the industry, from agricultural storage to residential homes, barndominiums, and commercial facilities.

Recognition for winners includes:

- Presentation during the Awards Luncheon at the Annual Frame Building Expo
- Publication features in NFBA communications and Frame Building News
- Exhibit displays on the Expo show floor viewed by more than 1,000 industry professionals
- A commemorative plaque highlighting the company's achievement

With new rules and entry requirements in place for 2025, NFBA encourages all eligible members to review the guidelines and submit their applications.

NFBA Conference & Expo 2026

The National Frame Building Association will host the 2026 NFBA Conference & Expo at the Oklahoma City Convention Center, February 25-27, 2026. This annual event brings together builders, suppliers, and industry leaders from across the country for three days of education, exhibits, and networking.

The Expo floor will showcase the latest products and services in the Post-frame Industry, with opportunities for exhibitors and attendees to connect face-to-face. Educational sessions will deliver practical knowledge on business growth, technical expertise, and safety best practices.

Exhibit space is available and companies are encouraged to reserve space early to maximize booth selection and promotional opportunities.

Plan now to join your fellow industry members from around the country for this premier event. Visit www.nfba.org for more information. ***FBN***

BY RANDY CHAFFEE
THE # HybridRoadWarriorRandy

The Role of Trade Associations According to Manufacturers

Let's be honest right out of the gate. The phrase "trade association" doesn't exactly light a fire under most manufacturers. It's not exciting. It doesn't boost sales reports. And it won't show up on your balance sheet with a tidy return. But ask the folks who have been in this industry long enough to have a few scabs and calluses, and they'll tell you—trade associations matter. Not because they're perfect. But because they give the people who build, supply, and sell in this industry a unified voice when it counts.

And here's the kicker: the folks who benefit most from these associations? Often the same ones sitting on the sidelines, arms crossed, wondering what they're getting for their dues.

I'm not preaching here. I've lived this from just about every angle—sales guy, rep, manufacturer partner, board member, speaker, and fellow trade show foot soldier. I've been doing this long enough to know we don't have time for filler, and we don't need pep rallies.

But we do need alignment.

This article isn't written from a 10,000-foot academic view. It's from the driver's seat of the industry pickup, after over a million miles, 300-plus trade shows, and more jobsite visits than I can count. It's also shaped by what I've heard in boardrooms and back halls, especially in rooms with folks from NFBA and BFBA who are just trying to do right by our industry.

Let's start here, because it's where most trade associations go sideways. Manufacturers don't want another newsletter. We don't want a dusty booth at a convention center. And we definitely don't want more meetings just to say we had them.

We want:

- Legislative defense when new regulations come knocking
- Building code clarity when things get murky
- A trained and growing labor force to build what we're selling
- A bigger voice to make sure post-frame isn't dismissed as second-tier construction.

When you ask manufacturers why they're involved—or why they're not—that's the scorecard. Are you showing up in state capitals? Are you defending post-frame in code books? Are you helping develop the next generation of skilled crews? Are you growing the reputation of the industry?

If not, you've lost their attention.

Let's talk wins. Because they do happen, and they're worth knowing.

Serving on the boards of NFBA and BFBA has shown me what it looks like behind the scenes. I've seen volunteers working harder than most people realize. I've seen executive directors doing more with less. And I've seen results when the membership actually engages.

Take NFBA's and BFBA's work influencing national and local building codes and standards. Without them, we'd be sitting ducks for regulations written by people who have never even set foot on a post-frame jobsite. These groups give us a seat at the table where decisions get hashed out—decisions that directly affect what we can build, how we build it, and whether we stay competitive.

That alone should be enough to justify showing up. But there's more.

Here's something that doesn't get talked about enough: trade associations bring cohesion to an industry that's too often split into silos.

You've got builders on one side, manufacturers on the other. Different challenges. Different language. Sometimes even different goals. But when both sides show up at the same table—when they actually listen, collaborate, and find common ground—that's when real momentum starts.

I've seen it at NFBA meetings and BFBA gatherings. Associations create a space where the manufacturer's perspective and the builder's reality meet in the middle. That kind of honest collaboration doesn't just solve problems. It prevents new ones. It leads to smarter product development, better training programs, and codes that reflect how things actually work in the field.

That's the force multiplier effect. You're not just solving your problem. You're helping the entire industry move forward together. And that doesn't happen by accident. The association is the nudge that gets it going.

So if the benefits are real, why do some manufacturers pull back?

Simple. Because they don't always feel it. They pay their dues. They show up once or twice. And then… silence.

That's not always the association's fault. Some members come in expecting instant leads or a quick payoff. This isn't a vending machine. It's a long game. It's about advocacy, access, and building a stronger, more professional industry for all of us.

But associations can absolutely do better. Don't just focus on recruiting. Focus on retaining. Make value obvious. Show your wins. Communicate often. And show up where your members already are—on jobsites, in yards, at events that matter.

When manufacturers feel seen and heard, they stay. When they feel disconnected, they don't.

I've had a front-row seat to this for a while now.

Serving on the boards of NFBA and BFBA has been one of the most meaningful chapters of my career. It's

not about politics or formality. It's about coming together—builders, suppliers, manufacturers, engineers, and academia—and keeping post-frame construction from getting pushed aside by people who don't understand what we do.

I've seen a single conversation shift the direction of a local code change. I've watched builder training events inspire the next generation. I've sat across from manufacturers who finally felt heard after years of trying to get traction. That's not theoretical. That's what real representation looks like.

And it doesn't happen without involvement.

Here's the plain truth. Trade associations are only as strong as the members behind them.

They aren't optional anymore. Not in this regulatory climate. Not with our labor challenges. Not with other construction methods constantly fighting for market share.

If you're a manufacturer and you've stepped away, I get it. Budgets are tight. Time is short. But ask yourself—who's speaking for you when decisions are being made?

If you're still involved, thank you. Now take the next step. Be visible. Be vocal. Push the association to serve your needs. And bring someone else along for the ride.

Because at the end of the day, we're not just building structures. We're building an industry. One that stands tall, speaks clearly, and works together instead of at odds.

And that starts when manufacturers and builders stop guarding turf and start building it—together. **FBN**

Randy Chaffee *is a 40+ year veteran of the post-frame and metal roofing industry. He serves on the boards of the National Frame Building Association (NFBA) and the Buckeye Frame Building Association (BFBA). When he's not on the road, on a podcast, or behind a booth, he's working to help manufacturers, builders, and reps connect, grow, and win—together.*

INDUSTRY NEWS //

Truss Plate Institute Announces Development of New ANSI Standards

The Truss Plate Institute (TPI), the nationally recognized leader in metal plate connected (MPC) wood truss engineering standards, has officially initiated the ANSI-accredited consensus process to develop a new American National Standard titled *TPI 2 – National Standard for Structural Testing of Metal Plate Connected Wood Trusses.* Notice of the project was published in ANSI's Standards Action on July 25, 2025.

The new TPI 2 standard will establish procedures for testing and evaluating Metal-Plate-Connected (MPC) wood trusses for four distinct objectives: (1) determining truss stiffness, (2) testing for design confirmation, (3) establishing design capacities, and (4) assessing deflection recovery performance. The standard will outline methods for conducting each type of test and provide guidance on interpreting and applying the results to support design validation, product evaluation, and quality assurance.

TPI is now accepting applications from interested individuals who wish to serve on the TPI 2 Project Committee. Stakeholders directly and materially affected by the content of the proposed standard are encouraged to apply. Application forms and additional information about the project are available on the TPI website at www.tpinst.org.

The development of TPI 2 will follow TPI's Project Committee Method for Achieving Consensus (PCMAC), an ANSI-accredited process that ensures balanced participation and transparency. The resulting standard is anticipated to eventually be referenced by the International Building Code (IBC) and serve as a resource for structural testing MPC wood trusses.

The TPI has also initiated the ANSI-accredited consensus process to develop a new American National Standard titled *TPI 3 – National Design Standard for Bracing Metal Plate Connected Wood Trusses.* Notice of which was also published on July 25, 2025.

The new TPI 3 standard will establish design requirements and methods for both permanent and temporary bracing of MPC wood trusses. It will build upon and ultimately replace the current industry standard known as *DSB - National Design Standard for Bracing Metal Plate Connected Wood Trusses.* The TPI 3 standard will focus on engineering-based bracing design practices applicable to building designers, truss engineers, and structural engineers of record.

TPI is now accepting applications from interested individuals who wish to serve on the TPI 3 Project Committee. Stakeholders directly and materially affected by the content of the proposed standard are encouraged to apply. Application forms and additional information about the project are also available on www.tpinst.org.

The development of TPI 3 will also follow TPI's Project Committee Method for Achieving Consensus (PCMAC), an ANSI-accredited process that ensures balanced participation and transparency. The resulting standard is anticipated to eventually be referenced by the International Building Code (IBC) and serve as a resource for the design of structural bracing of MPC wood trusses.

For more information or to request an application, contact the Truss Plate Institute directly through www.tpinst.org or by calling 240-587-5582. **FBN**

A New Era of Collaboration

Why SBCA's New Professional Membership Matters for Framing Contractors and Post-Frame Building Owners

By SBCA Staff

The Structural Building Components Association (SBCA) has always been a hub for collaboration and technical leadership within the component manufacturing industry. Through resources like the Building Component Safety Information (BCSI) guide, Jobsite Packages, *SBCA Magazine,* and BCMC, SBCA has built a strong reputation for helping professionals use structural components like roof and floor trusses effectively and safely.

Now, SBCA is taking an important step outward. The association has re-imagined its Professional Membership category to better engage a broader set of industry participants—architects, engineers, code officials, framers, builders, and building owners. For framing contractors and post-frame building owners in particular, this membership offers a way to stay ahead of existing technical responsibilities while providing access to tools, education, and collaboration that can make post-frame projects go smoother and safer.

Why SBCA Created This New Membership Category

The decision to expand SBCA's Professional Membership is rooted in the growing complexity of building construction. In the post-frame industry, truss spans continue to increase and the importance of everything from temporary bracing to permanent restraint is becoming more vital to the long-term performance on these buildings. The component manufacturer cannot, nor should they, address these important aspects of post-frame construction on their own. Both the *ANSI/TPI 1-2022* (TPI 1) standard and the *International Building Code* (IBC) make it clear that every party involved in the construction of a building, from the owner to the framing contractor to the registered design professional, has specific duties that must be fulfilled.

Under TPI 1, the building designer is responsible for the overall structural system and preparation of construction documents, while the framing contractor must construct the building in accordance with those documents and the truss submittal package. The owner, who may often be considered the building designer as well when it comes to post-frame construction, is obligated to retain the necessary professionals and ensure construction follows code-compliant plans.

The IBC reinforces these roles by requiring that construction documents be prepared by a registered design professional when mandated by law, and it establishes the concept of the "design professional in responsible charge." This individual is accountable for coordinating all submittals, including deferred submittals like the long-span roof trusses used in post-frame construction, and ensuring they conform to the design of the building.

For framing contractors and post-frame building owners, these requirements establish clear accountability. Framing contractors cannot simply rely on informal field adjustments without proper documentation, and owners cannot sidestep their duty to engage qualified design professionals when necessary. Deferred submittals, like truss packages, must be reviewed and approved before installation, placing additional responsibility on both the framing contractor and owner to ensure compliance.

Recognizing this, SBCA created its re-imagined Professional Membership to provide the technical knowledge, resources, and collaborative connections necessary for industry professionals to fulfill these obligations more easily and effectively. This membership is designed to bridge the gap between what the codes and standards establish as defined roles and responsibilities, and what happens on the jobsite.

Why Framing Contractors Benefit

For framing contractors, ANSI/TPI 1 is clear: as the contractor, you are responsible for constructing the building in accordance with both the construction documents and the truss submittal package. That means it's not enough to make adjustments on the fly in the field—their role is tied directly to what has been designed, documented, and approved.

The IBC reinforces this by requiring that deferred submittals like long-span truss packages cannot be installed until they have been reviewed by the design professional in responsible charge and approved by the building official, including any required permanent bracing plan. If the trusses are installed without this approval, the contractor is not only risking inspection failure, they're also assuming liability that should not be theirs otherwise.

SBCA's Professional Membership gives contractors the tools to stay compliant while protecting their profitability:

- Technical guidance (like BCSI documents and installation best practices) that clarifies your responsibilities and helps ensure you're building to approved plans.

Deferred submittals, like truss packages, must be reviewed and approved before installation, placing additional responsibility on both the framing contractor and owner to ensure compliance. PHOTO COURTESY OF SBCA.

- Education on code compliance so you can avoid delays, rework, or failed inspections.
- Stronger collaboration channels with component manufacturers and design professionals, reducing conflicts and making it easier to resolve issues before they hit the jobsite.
- Access to peer learning and networking, where other framers share how they've navigated their TPI 1 and IBC responsibilities successfully.

In short, SBCA's Professional Membership can help framing contractors fulfill their contractual and code obligations while keeping projects on schedule and protecting their business operations.

Why Post-Frame Building Owners Benefit

For owners of post-frame buildings, TPI 1 and the IBC also assign significant responsibilities. TPI 1 defines the owner as the party who must either prepare or retain a building designer/registered design professional to prepare the construction documents, and either construct the building themselves or retain a contractor to do so. The IBC requires that, in many cases, construction documents be prepared by a registered design professional and submitted for approval, with the owner responsible for designating the professional in "responsible charge."

In practice, this means building owners cannot take a "hands-off" approach. They are ultimately accountable for ensuring that the structural design is properly prepared and code-compliant. In addition, they must ensure that deferred submittals, like trusses, are reviewed, approved, and incorporated into the building plans before installation. Finally, owners are charged with ensuring that the work of design professionals and contractors, including the framer, is coordinated effectively to deliver a building that passes inspection and performs as designed over the intended life of the building.

SBCA's Professional Membership provides owners with:

- Clear guidance on their code and TPI 1 obligations, helping avoid costly missteps.
- Access to technical resources that explain the role of trusses and other structural components in simple, practical terms.
- Connections with qualified contractors, component manufacturers, and design professionals who are committed to building safe, efficient, code-compliant post-frame structures.
- Confidence in their investment, knowing they are fulfilling their role responsibly and protecting their long-term interests.

By joining SBCA as a Professional Member, post-frame building owners gain access to the knowledge and relationships they need to manage their responsibilities effectively—and avoid the potentially expensive consequences of non-compliance or poorly performing buildings.

Building a Stronger Future Together

SBCA's restructured Professional Membership is more than just a new membership category, it's a way to align everyone in the construction supply chain. For framing contractors and post-frame building owners, it provides the knowledge, tools, and connections necessary to meet today's responsibilities under TPI 1 and the IBC, while building more efficient, code-compliant, and durable structures.

Engaging in this new membership is an easy and logical step to take, resulting in fewer headaches, better collaboration, and stronger buildings.

Interested in learning more? https://www.sbcacomponents.com/sbca-professional-membership. **FBN**

One Big Beautiful Bill

Tax Law Changes Manufacturers Need To know

By Gary Reichert

One of the great things about my position at Shield Wall Media is I am in regular contact with upper management and C-Suite level people at a lot of construction related companies. One of the bad things is I am in regular contact with upper management and C-Suite level people at a lot of construction-related companies, and they share questions.

Rarely, I know the answers. Usually, it ends in a research project because if one person in our audience asked a question, many more have the same question and haven't asked. Those questions occasionally become article topics.

The most recent question was about One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBB) and how it affects Qualified Production Property, Bonus Depreciation and Rule 179. I am not nearly qualified to answer that question, but I can research.

I am not an accountant or tax attorney. This is not intended as tax or legal advice. The objective of this article is to provide enough knowledge for you to ask your advisors the right questions.

On July 4, 2025, Congress gave us the One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBB). It made sweeping changes across many areas, but three stand out for manufacturers and builders:

- Bonus Depreciation (Section 168(k))
- Section 179 (Rule 179)
- Qualified Production Property (QPP) (brand-new Section 168(n))

The name isn't just hype. This bill really is huge (about 1,000 pages), and with some planning may be beautiful, because you may be able to expand and grow your business sooner. You can read the entire bill at https://tinyurl.com/BBB0725. Here are the changes.

Bonus Depreciation: 100% is Permanent

"Section 168(k)… is amended… by inserting '100 percent.'" — OBBB text

No more phase-downs. Property acquired after January 19, 2025 can be fully deducted in year one.

What that means for production facilities and shops:

- Roll formers, forklifts, CNC machines — all 100% deductible.
- Delivery trucks, trailers, and jobsite equipment — also 100%.
- Software and certain systems — covered too.

Qualified Production Property

QPP is new. It allows you to expense the production-use portion of a nonresidential building, instead of depreciating.

The rules:

- Construction must begin between Jan. 19, 2025 and Dec. 31, 2028.
- The building must be in service before Jan. 1, 2031.
- Only production space qualifies. Offices, sales areas, and parking don't.
- Stop using the space for production within 10 years and you may face recapture.

Why it matters:

For a 60,000-square-foot expansion, if 45,000 is production, that portion can be fully expensed in year one. Traditionally, it would have taken 39 years. That's a seismic shift for plant expansions, modular facilities, and automated shops.

Section 179: More Room to Deduct

OBBB raised the Section 179 limits.

- Maximum deduction: $2.5 million
- Phase-out starts at $4 million
- Still tied to taxable income (can't create a loss)

For smaller shops (shed builders, truss yards, roll formers and component manufacturers) this remains a flexible tool. Un-

Section 179 vs. Bonus Depreciation

Section 179
- Limit: $2.5M
- Phase-out: $4M
- Must have taxable income
- Pick and choose assets

Bonus Depreciation
- No dollar cap
- Can create a loss
- Automatic 100% expensing

Quick Checklist
- Track contract dates (must be after Jan. 19, 2025).
- Map out production vs. non-production space for QPP.
- Verify your state's conformity rules.
- Decide when to use Section 179 versus bonus depreciation.

Plan for recapture if you may repurpose space.

like bonus depreciation, Section 179 lets you choose which assets to expense.

Our audience includes equipment manufacturers, component manufacturers and builders. Here's how OBBB changes the landscape:

• Manufacturers can justify expansions faster. QPP reduces the after-tax cost of new production facilities.

• Builders can help clients design with tax in mind—floor plans that separate production and office space maximizing immediate savings.

Accelerated depreciation and QPP both a benefit manufacturers seeking new production facilities and a potential closing tool, for the builder, in the design build process

When we acquired the Construction Division of F+W Media through Chapter 11, timing deductions and cash flow was critical to survival. OBBB doesn't make decisions for you, but it creates more flexibility allowing you more paths to success. ***FBN***

How to Determine Qualified Production Property (QPP)

QPP is the production-use portion of a nonresidential building — plus the machinery and systems integral to production. Determining what counts is critical, because it sets the size of your deduction.

Included (Eligible for QPP):

• Production floors: Manufacturing and processing areas.

• Material handling: Aisles, staging, and loading areas integral to production flow.

• Machinery and equipment: Roll formers, CNC lines, presses, welders, conveyor systems.

• Built-in systems serving production: Heavy-duty electrical, dust collection, compressed air, overhead cranes — if they directly support production.

Excluded (Not QPP):

• Offices, breakrooms, administrative space.

• Sales areas, showrooms, lobbies.

• R&D labs, software development, engineering spaces.

• Parking lots, employee facilities, or lodging.

• Machinery unrelated to production (e.g., office IT systems).

Key Rules:

• Construction must begin after Jan. 19, 2025 and before Dec. 31, 2028.

• Property must be in service before Jan. 1, 2031.

• If production use ends within 10 years, IRS recapture rules apply.

• Lessors can't claim QPP for space or equipment used by a tenant — the tenant must elect it.

Pro Tip: Keep floor plans, equipment layouts, and system drawings on file. The IRS will expect documentation tying production space and machinery directly to the deduction.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION (required by Act of August 12, 1970: Section 3685, Title 39, United States Code). 1. FRAME BUILDING NEWS. 2. (ISSN: 1079-0870) 3. Filing date: 9/2/25. 4. Issue frequency: January, April, June, August and November. 5. Number of issues published annually: 5. 6. The annual subscription price is $29.98. 7. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: Shield Wall Media 1990 Godfrey Dr., Waupaca, WI 54981. 8. Complete mailing address of headquarters or general business office of publisher: Shield Wall Media 150 Depot St., Iola, WI 54945. 9. Full names and complete mailing addresses of publisher, editor, and managing editor. Publisher: Gary Reichert 150 Depot St., Iola, WI 54945. Editor: Karen Knapstein 1990 Godfrey Dr., Waupaca, WI 54981. Managing Editor: Gary Reichert 1990 Godfrey Dr., Waupaca, WI 54981. 10. 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Open-Walled Riding Arena

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Nestled in the serene countryside of Columbus, North Carolina, this 75' x 140' x 14' horse riding arena is a testament to the synergy between functionality and craftsmanship. Installed by Pro Property Services, the structure features a robust roof-only post frame kit supplied by True Metal Supply. Designed for equestrian activities, the arena prioritizes durability and performance, ensuring it stands the test of time under demanding conditions.

The roof incorporates True Metal Supply's durable, Charcoal, Tuff-Rib through-fastened metal panels, coated with Sherwin-Williams Coil Coatings' WeatherXL® for exceptional protection and lasting aesthetic appeal. Supported by True Metal Supply Parallel Chord Steel Trusses and anchored by Southern Yellow Pine 10"x10" post columns, the arena reflects thoughtful design and precision. Triangle Fastener's Sturdi-Wall Drillset Anchors provide secure connections for the foundation, while Atlas Bolt and Screw Company's Wood Ultimate® Fasteners are used to ensure the reliable attachment of the metal roof panels.

This project not only highlights the quality and reliability of materials provided by True Metal Supply but also showcases the craftsmanship of Pro Property Services in delivering a space perfectly suited to its purpose. ***FBN***

PROJECT DETAILS

BUILDER: Pro Property Services
LOCATION: Columbus, North Carolina
PROJECT & SIZE: Riding Arena, 75'W x 140'L x 14'H
PRIMARY SUPPLIER: True Metal Supply
- Parallel Chord Steel Trusses
- Tuff-Rib through-fastened metal roofing panels, Charcoal

COATING: Sherwin-Williams Coil Coatings WeatherXL® Coil Coating
FOUNDATION: Concrete Piers
POSTS: Old South Wood Preserving #1 SYP, Structural #1 10"x10" Post Columns
FASTENERS: Triangle Fastener: Sturdi-Wall Drillset Anchors Model: SW60; Atlas Bolt and Screw Company: Wood Ultimate® Fasteners

CONSTRUCTION SURVEY INSIGHTS

By Gary Reichert, Publisher

Industry Insights Start with You: Take the Fall Survey

Welcome to autumn. This season includes a lot of work to get ready for winter and the new year. All of us here at Shield Wall Media are asking for a little help with one of those fall tasks, and it doesn't involve a rake.

This will be the third year for our *CSI-Annual.*

The *CSI-Annual* is where we compile industry data from our proprietary survey and other sources. We share this in the form of a book with all of the subscribers of all of our magazines and send roughly 2,000 additional copies to shows and events. We provide you with this industry data free of charge. That is in addition to our magazine subscriptions, that you also do not pay to receive.

As a little "inside baseball" between the survey, printing, mailing and writing the *CSI-Annual & Market Report,* Shield Wall Media invests a little over $50,000 to get you this information.

If you would like to sponsor the book, we would love that. But, that is not what I am asking for.

I am asking that you check your email and take the survey. This costs you nothing but a few minutes of your time. The survey is anonymous, so you are not sharing any proprietary information.

Last year we increased the sample size by approximately 40% and received over 3,000 responses. We would like to go over 4,000 this year. Across our titles we have about 100,000 subscriptions so that should be achievable.

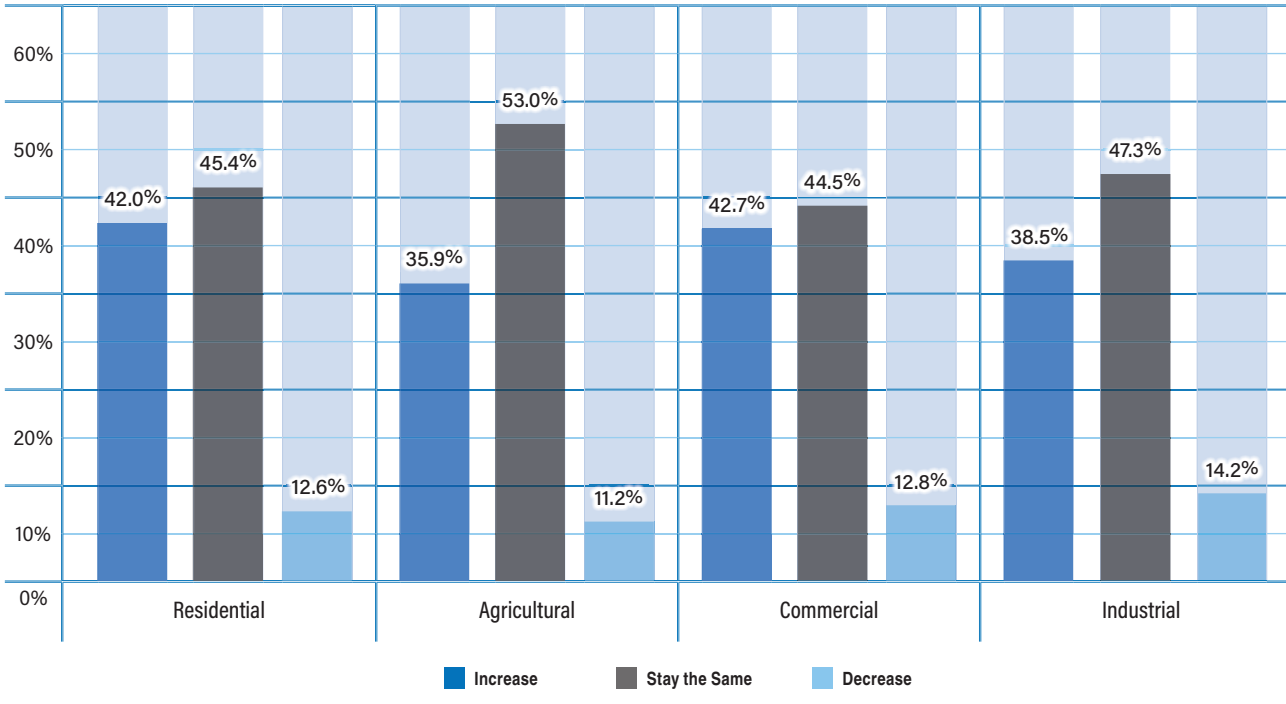
Please consider this a guilt trip. If you read our *CSI-Annual* and don't take the survey remember your peers did something you did not, to improve and help grow our corner of the construction world.

Help us help you. And, if you would like to come to Waupaca and rake leaves, we can give you a pass on taking the survey.

So you know what we are looking for, here are a few of the questions that will be on our survey, with the answers in the *CSI-Annual & Market Report* (mailing at the end of Q1, 2026):

- How did your 2025 profitability compare to 2024?
- How do you think your 2026 gross sales will compare to 2025?
- Across the country will residential construction increase, decrease or stay the same?
- Across the country will agricultural construction increase, decrease or stay the same?
- Which of the following (if any) do you see as a challenge in 2026?
- What new products or technology innovations are most likely to have the greatest impact on your business in 2026? ***FBN***

Expected Growth by Market Segment



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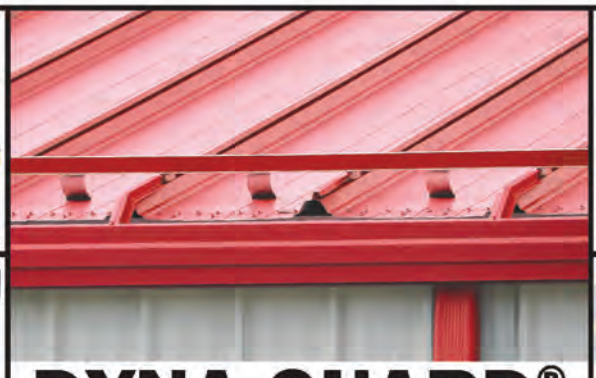

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