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Shed Hauler's Brotherhood:

Helping Others for the Long Haul

Our community is a tight-knit one. You could say it's a brotherhood. That's most evident during hard times, like those caused by natural disasters.

It's amazing how many individuals and businesses in our industry have donated time and money to help victims recover after Hurricane Helene devastated the Southeast in late September. Even now, five months after the hurricane, many are still without permanent homes. But volunteers are working around the clock

to help provide shelter and other needs.

In this issue, we're profiling the work of the Shed Haulers Brotherhood (shbrotherhood.org), a national nonprofit organization that assists those who work in the shed hauling business. SHB's primary mission is to help their members, but they also feel a deep commitment to help others as well.

After the hurricane hit, SHB founder Sam Byler created a hurricane disaster relief program that's delivered more than 400 sheds to those made homeless by the storm. The sheds give hope to those

in bleak circumstances. Life was hard enough in the fall when they lost everything, but it's even harder now that it's the middle of winter. Not only did they lose their homes, many lost their job as well when their employers were wiped out. It will take years for these areas to recover.

Read the full story of SHB and their work in their article on page 20. We are thankful to them and *everyone* who is helping the hurting through this time.



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20

CONTENTS

Features:

- 6** Color Choices
What Will Customers Want in 2025?
- 10** Garage Doors
What Homeowners Need to Know
- 16** Greenville Show
Delivers the Goods
Exhibitors at the 2025 Garage, Shed &
Carport Builder Show Showcase
Top Notch Products and Services
- 20** The Shed Haulers
Brotherhood
A Business Organization
With Helping Hands
- 24** Rent-to-Own
Best Practices
Training and Clear Communication
Are Essential
- 28** Site Prep and
Foundation Options
for Portable Sheds
Laying the Groundwork
for Customer Satisfaction
- 32** Find Your Voice
Creating and Maintaining
a Brand Voice for Your Company
- 41** Project of the Month
Custom Shed Featuring Haas Door

Departments:

- 3** Editor's Note
- 36** Business Connections
- 39** Industry News
- 40** New Products
- 42** Construction
Survey Insights



On The Cover:

A Westwood Sheds truck delivering donated sheds to Hurricane Helene victims.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SHED HAULERS BROTHERHOOD

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ADVERTISING INDEX

Company	Page #
Acu-Form	37
AkzoNobel	7
American Garage Door Factory	11
Apple Outdoor Supply	IFC
ASC Machine Tools Inc.....	19, 36
ASCO Machines USA.....	37
ASTA America by Janus International.....	9
Aztec Washer Company.....	36
Cold Spring Enterprises	38
Direct Metals Inc.....	37
Dripstop™.....	BC
Formwright.....	38
Golden Rule Fasteners.....	37
Kevmar Manufacturing.....	38
Marion Manufacturing.....	37
Perma-Column LLC.....	36
Pine Hill Trailers.....	36
Planet Saver Industries / GreenPost	36
Progressive Metals	36
Red Dot Products, LLC	37
rFOIL Reflective Insulation	38
RTO National.....	27
SpeedLap LLC.....	37
Stan Group dba: Liberty Seamless	36
SteelGrip SAMM, Inc.....	37
Storage Xpress Corp.....	38
United Steel Supply.....	36

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Color Choices

What Will Customers Want in 2025?

BY LINDA SCHMID

Most would agree that the color of a building is not the most important element of it, but most customers care about the color of a building they may work in or even have on their property for a long time.

What do metal suppliers see coming in 2025? How do they decide what colors to provide customers in a new year?

Scott Steele of Best Buy Metals said their purchasing team looks at the trends in their sales to determine if their lineup of the most popular colors will change.

“White is a popular choice for exterior wall panels, but we have seen an upswing in Grey and Charcoal as those tend to match some of the more popular color patterns for modern home construction,” Steele said. For agriculture red/barn red and green are very popular, either as wall panel or trim, and white plays a role in wall panels for ag buildings.

Typically, if it’s a roofing renovation on an existing home built in the ’90s, we see black and charcoal as the most popular combinations. For more recent construction, the colors have more variety. For instance, Galvalume is a popular roofing color. Usually, you will find Galvalume roofing with white trim and just about any wall panel color because Galvalume’s metallic look matches very well with both bold colors and softer hues. Steele expects to see the same

colors in 2025, for the most part.

“Black is always popular for roofing, matte and high gloss, and high definition with textured coatings to add depth to the metal” Steele said. “So those will always be in the lineup, as well as white and bronze. An interesting note is that there is a current trend among consumers choosing products like the ULG (ultra low gloss) versus the HD product. Both have a matte finish but ULG does not incorporate a texture, while HD does. There is also a trending change in gauge preference that affects our orders for heavier weight coil.”

Often residential projects and commercial projects use similar color choices. It really depends on form and function Steele said. A commercial storage building will use standard colors. However, if it is to be used for any type of branding, businesses are more particular about color combinations.

Kathi Miller at McElroy Metal said, “In 2024, black and gray hues continued to dominate residential and light commercial color choices. However, color selection can vary by market segment. For instance, industrial facilities often prioritize lighter colors to enhance energy efficiency, while residential projects may lean towards darker shades based on owner preference and curb appeal. Interestingly, regional location doesn’t seem to play a significant role in color choices,” Miller added.

Miller said her team anticipates that

black shades will continue in popularity. They also see a growing interest in natural colors and wood grain patterns, reflecting a trend towards an organic, earthy aesthetic.

Miller added, “One important point to consider when helping a customer is the impact of color selection on warranty coverage. Certain colors, particularly vibrant shades like bright blues, reds, and oranges, may offer a reduced warranty. This is primarily due to the stability of the pigments used in their manufacturing process, which can affect their long-term performance.”

Carly Green of EDCO Products said neutrals such as gray and sand tones dominate roofing orders, though some homeowners pick forest green or burgundy.

“There are some colors that have a very short season, but typically high-trend colors last for several years,” Green said. For example, the black and white siding trend has been solidly in place for the last five or so years. Building owners often choose timeless shades that are compatible with their existing structure or neighborhood. With that said, we are not expecting any major changes in color trends for 2025.”

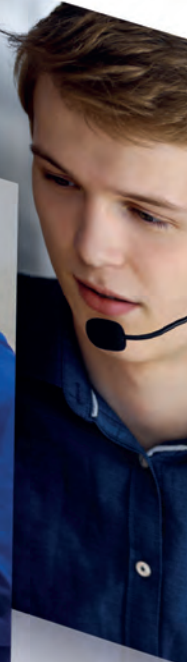
Green said they are constantly analyzing demand through sales data, regional trends and forecasts, and gathering feedback from customers and vendors. In addition, they watch media trends to help identify what the near future will bring.

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AkzoNobel

2025 Color of the Year

A look at what coating companies are forecasting for this year can be helpful in predicting what colors you should consider for your product lineup. Paint and finish companies generally have color teams that watch societal concerns, gauge the “collective head-space,” follow the trends, and develop predictions of what consumers will be looking for in colors. This year their respective “Colors of the Year” appear to have one thing in common: They are bold.

BEHR Paint Company

BEHR Paint Company’s Color of the Year is called “Rumors,” a ruby red that adds a little drama while feeling warm and elegant. BEHR’s research has shown that Americans feel that red can have a positive, energizing impact on their home. More than half of people surveyed felt that Rumors reminds them of a luxurious hospitality space, such as a high-end hotel.

Rumors is part of BEHR’s new palette, an annual selection of forward-looking colors, ranging from warm tones to cooler shades, coordinated to simplify the color selection process.



Behr’s Rumors

AkzoNobel

AkzoNobel has introduced three inspiring color stories — Bold, Human, and Proud — designed to empower customers in the construction and domestic appliance markets to assist in setting their projects apart with style and creativity. The Bold Palette sparks courage to go beyond the ordinary, with bright, uplifting shades that inspire adventure. “Human” embraces grounded, earthy tones, ideal for creating warm and natural backdrops that highlight craftsmanship and natural materials. “Proud” celebrates individuality, offering confident, expressive colors that create spaces as unique as their creators.

These palettes are anchored by AkzoNobel’s Color of the Year 2025, True Joy™, a vibrant sunny yellow that brings optimism, pride, and a splash of vibrant color to metal architecture and domestic appliance markets.



AkzoNobel’s True Joy. PHOTO COURTESY OF AKZONOBEL



PPG’s Purple Basil. PHOTO COURTESY OF PPG

PPG

The PPG 2025 Color of the Year is Purple Basil, a dusty violet hue that is warm and inviting, yet cool and mysterious. It is part of PPG’s Kinetic line.

“As consumers embrace an unprecedented period of newness, movement is a distinct global theme shaping design trends in numerous industries,” said Vanessa Peterson, PPG Color Design Manager, Industrial Coatings, US.

“The Kinetic color theme reflects the need for self-reliance in a fast-paced world. It also highlights the interplay between nature and science that is driving innovation, and the influence of new tools like artificial intelligence that are fostering boundless creativity... We’re seeing color trends reflect the need for dynamic colors, moving past the soft, more banal, safe color choices in favor of rich jewel tones, deeper earthen pastels and ancestral-inspired midtones.”

Sherwin-Williams

Sherwin-Williams had a hard time choosing just one color for 2025, and so they went to a “color capsule” of six shades. Including neutrals that work with the bolder colors, the capsule facilitates color mixing and matching.

“We wanted a modern, fresh take on color while creating a usable palette,” said Sherwin-Williams’ Senior Architectural Color Designer Brynn Wildenauer. “Our color experts curated six hues for the building products market that create stunning combinations and push the expectations of color in this industry.” **GSCB**



Sherwin-Williams’ Rain Cloud



Sherwin-Williams’ Bosc Pear



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Garage Doors

What Homeowners Need to Know

BY DAN BROWNELL

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Garages and garage door designs have changed greatly over the last 100 years. For homes built in the early 20th century and earlier, before mass production of cars, garages were typically unattached structures that were converted barns or carriage houses. By the mid-20th century, attached garages were common, but tended to be downplayed and placed at the rear of the home because small-town culture favored front porches that provided a space for neighbors to socialize. In the later decades of the 20th century, with the rise of the suburban, commuting culture, garages were placed at the front of the house in an architectural concept known as “garage-forward.”

Modern garages commonly take up 30 percent or more of the front of a home and in some cases, more than half. With garage doors playing such a major role in both practical use and curb



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With modern home design, garage doors often account for a large portion of the front of the home, so they play a big role in curb appeal. Since curb appeal has a major impact on the value and salability of a home, garage door aesthetics are very important.

appeal, it's important to carefully choose garage door type and style. The decision should take into account zoning, building codes, permits, and homeowner association requirements. They should also consider the home's architecture, style, and color, as well as those of surrounding homes in the neighborhood. Finally, the homeowner's intended use for the garage can impact garage door choice.

Zoning, Building Codes, Permits, and HoA Restrictions

Zoning may impact the type and size of a door allowed. For instance, a commercial rolling door may not be allowed in a residential structure. Also, building codes often cover safety and energy efficiency. For example, they can specify wind-load, fire-resistance, and insulation requirements. Permits may be needed to install or replace a garage door, particularly if it includes structural or electrical work. In addition, homeowner associations (HoAs) or historic district designations may restrict the materials, style, color, and size of a garage door. Finally, inspections may be necessary after the work is completed.

Styles

Even if there are no HoA, zoning, or historic district restrictions regarding style, it's still a good idea to keep the overall neighborhood ambience in mind when choosing a garage door. A door that clashes with a neighbor's may affect home values and cause tension. Furthermore, a conscious decision should be made about whether the door should blend in with the overall home design or create a contrast to make it a focal point. The door color can be matched to, or contrasted with, the home's siding, trim, and entry door.

Types

Garage doors have different options for opening to make them suitable for various purposes.



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Sectional Doors

One of the most common types of garage door is the sectional door, comprised of a series of hinged horizontal panels that retract along tracks on the garage's sides and curve into the ceiling. This type of door is well suited for remote control operation but, when retracted, is stored horizontally below the ceiling, preventing that space from being used for storage. Sectional doors generally have an emergency release to allow manual opening if the remote operation fails.

Barn/Carriage/Hinged Doors

Barn or carriage doors are hinged vertically on the sides of the garage and swing closed in the center. The advantage of this type of door is that it can be used more like an entry door because it only needs to be opened slightly to enter. Barn-style doors need more space outside to allow the doors to be opened completely. They are also not suited to remote openers and are more difficult to weatherproof effectively.

Bifold Doors

Bifold doors, like barn doors, also rely on vertical hinges, but require less outside space to open. Each of the two main doors is hinged in the center and folds accordion-like against its garage door jamb. Bifold doors are not well suited to remote openers or cold weather areas because they're difficult to seal and insulate and ice and snow in front of the doors can make them difficult to open.

Canopy Tilt-Up/Up-and-Over Doors

Tilt-up canopy doors use a single panel that's raised partially into the garage. While open, the bottom third of the door remains outside the garage, forming a canopy, which for small garages, can help create an extended working space protected from sun and rain. Raising the door requires a significant swing and arm reach, so it may not be a good option for elderly homeowners or others with physical limitations. The outward swing of the bottom of the door requires some space for clearance, so the size of the driveway might be a factor. Because it is one-piece, there are fewer moving parts to break.

Retractable Tilt-Up/Up-and-Over Doors

Tilt-up retractable doors also use a single panel and have similar characteristics as canopy doors but completely retract inside the garage when open. Because these doors are completely contained within the garage when open, they require more headroom than a canopy door but work better with a remote opener.

Insulated Doors

Insulated doors aren't considered a door type. Rather, they're a construction option available with steel doors from all manufacturers. They are available with three standard construction options: non-insulated, vinyl back, and steel back with R-values depending on the thickness of insulation used. Insulation is available in polystyrene, which is most popular, and polyure-



Barn-style garage doors have an attractive, rustic appeal, but they need more space outside to allow the doors to be opened completely. That's less of an issue, however, if the home has a large driveway. They're also more difficult to weatherproof effectively, but that may be less of a problem in warmer climates. Probably the biggest drawback of barn doors is that they aren't suited to remote openers.

thane, which provides a higher R-value.

Insulated garage doors are not always required by local code, but they can be well worth their cost in energy savings and other benefits. They can reduce temperature swings in the garage itself and, in an attached garage, can also reduce energy consumption in rooms adjacent and above the garage. Insulated doors tend to be sturdier, more secure, quieter to operate because they reduce vibration as they open and close and reduce street noise. They can also increase home value and desirability.

Garage Door Materials

Steel

Steel doors are moderately priced, are sturdy, and are available in a wide range of styles, finishes, and colors. They are low maintenance but are vulnerable to rust where paint or other rustproof coatings have flaked off or been scratched. They have high heat conductivity, so they're prone to heat loss but are available with insulated cores.

Aluminum

Aluminum doors are lightweight, which can reduce the workload on garage door openers. Aluminum is corrosion-resistant, which is preferable for coastal or other humid environments, but it is also generally less durable and more easily dented than steel.

Wood

The natural look of wood can be more aesthetically appealing and create a higher-end look. But this comes at a higher cost, both in the initial expense and the time and money spent on regular upkeep, such as resealing, repainting, or restaining. Wood doors are more vulnerable to wet environments, as they can warp, swell, rot, and crack. This can affect their function as well as their appearance, so they typically have much shorter warranties. Wood conducts heat less than steel and aluminum, so it has more natural insulative properties, but insulated wood doors are available to increase the door's R-value. Wood doors are heavier, so they create more wear and tear on garage door openers and shorten their life.

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Fiberglass

Fiberglass doors are sturdy and resistant to corrosion, rot, and insects, and are low maintenance. But they tend to be brittle and susceptible to cracking over time, especially in freezing weather. They're lightweight and are lower cost than other doors, but are much more limited in colors, styles, and finishes.

Vinyl

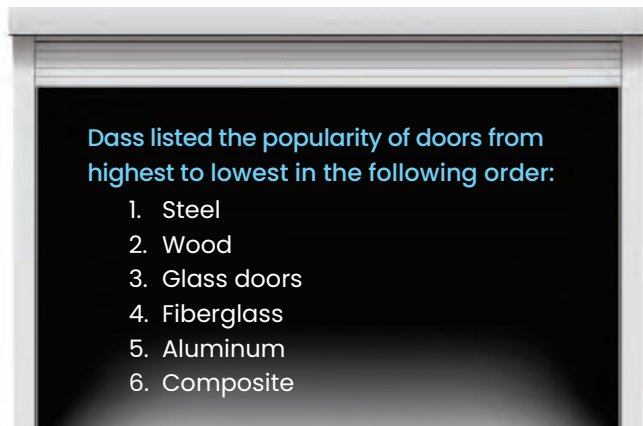
Vinyl doors are lightweight, low maintenance, and insect-, corrosion-, and rot-resistant. However, they're more temperature sensitive, so they may warp in extreme heat and become brittle in extreme cold. They're lower cost than wood and fiberglass doors but, because vinyl is conductive, they may need upgrading to insulated vinyl for colder climates. Finally, there aren't as many options for colors, and vinyl is susceptible to sunlight, so darker colors may fade over time.

Glass Panels

Glass panel doors create a sleek, modern appearance for modern architecture to enhance curb appeal. They're one of the most expensive door options and may be a significant investment. The glass can allow a high degree of natural light, which can be a significant benefit, depending on the intended use of the garage. The amount of tint determines the amount of natural light but also affects privacy and security. The more transparent the glass panels are, the more light they transmit, but the less privacy they afford. Glass panel doors are insect-, corrosion-, and rot-resistant and are relatively low maintenance but may need frequent cleaning. Glass panel doors are heavy, so they may need a more powerful garage door opener. Glass may either let in too much heat in hot areas or lose too much heat in cold areas, so the environment needs to be carefully considered.



All glass Centauri garage door by Kevmar Manufacturing.
PHOTO COURTESY OF KEVMAR MANUFACTURING



Dass listed the popularity of doors from highest to lowest in the following order:

1. Steel
2. Wood
3. Glass doors
4. Fiberglass
5. Aluminum
6. Composite

Composite

Composite doors are made from a combination of materials such as polyurethane, resins, and wood fibers. They're durable and low maintenance but heavy so they put more strain on garage door openers. They're more expensive than steel, aluminum, fiberglass, and vinyl doors, but lower cost than wood doors. They offer a wide range of styles, colors, and finishes, and are especially suited to mimicking wood but at a more affordable price.

Product Popularity

According to Shiv Dass, national sales manager of American Garage Door Factory, sectional doors have been and are still the most popular door type for residential builders. The raised panel style is traditionally the most in demand, while carriage house and modern have seen an increase in popularity over the last few years. Barn, carriage, and hinged doors have grown in popularity due to the curb appeal of the design. They are attractive but are double or triple the price of a standard, traditional door. For many homeowners, cost is important and should be taken into consideration.

Dass noted that steel doors are the most cost effective, but when appearance is most important, steel carriage style, wood, and glass are the most common upgrade. He also pointed out that garage door openers are an important part of a garage door system. The two types are the rail, which is most common, and the side mount, which is gaining in popularity. The rail is most cost effective but limits overhead storage space and can obstruct the overall garage design. The side mount is more expensive but creates more space in the garage and allows for more creative garage design.

Conclusion

Homeowners aren't likely to know all the factors that need to be considered when purchasing a garage door. Builders can assist their clients with making the choice that makes the most sense for them, taking into consideration intended use, climate, durability, aesthetics, cost, and applicable building codes, zoning, permits, and other requirements. **GSCB**

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Greenville Show Delivers the Goods

Exhibitors at the 2025 Garage, Shed & Carport Builder Show Showcase Top Notch Products and Services

BY DAN BROWNELL

The 2025 Garage, Shed & Carport Builder Show, held Jan. 15-16 in Greenville, South Carolina, gave show exhibitors the opportunity to present their array of goods, services, new releases, and expertise.



Cold Spring Enterprises' VersaTube machine allows builders to manufacture their own components for metal carports and garages.

Products and Services

As always, exhibitors impressed attendees with their displays and depth of knowledge, as well as their ability to show how their offerings can help boost their clients' business.

Networking

Attendees networked with exhibitors and each other at the booths, throughout the show floor, at the complimentary morning breakfasts, during the Wednesday evening dinner and social hour, and before and after show hours in the lobby and at the hotels. The opportunity to meet and greet in person is a key to establishing deep, long-lasting working relationships.

Seminars

Each morning kicked off with informational sessions. First on the docket each morning was an opportunity to meet with Shield Wall Media editors for "Coffee and Conversations." Tuesday morning sessions included "Following the Path to Success" with Gary Boyle from Making Sales Simple; "Not All Steel Is Created Equal" by veteran steel industry expert Don Switzer of Steel Dynamics; "Considerations in Rollforming" presented by Ben Schmidt of Bradbury Group; and "Innovation, Thinking Outside the Box, and the Power of Change," with Erez Halfon of Mobeno Solar Solutions.

Wednesday morning sessions featured "Moisture Mitigation" with Brett Clary of Dripstop; and "How to Get Free Business Publicity Through Editorial Coverage" by Dan Brownell, editor of Garage, Shed & Carport Builder magazine.

Dual 2026 Shows

The 2026 Garage, Shed & Carport Builder Show will be held alongside the first Rural Builder Show Jan. 21-22 in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. [GSCB](#)

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MIDCO manufactures pre-hung doors and distributes windows, hardware, roll-up doors, and aluminum products for the shed and carport industry.



ASC Machine Tools, Inc. specializes in roll-forming machinery, tooling, and associated equipment.



On Wednesday morning, industry steel expert Don Switzer of Steel Dynamics drew a crowd with his seminar “Not All Steel Is Created Equal.”



Attendees picking up show programs and tote bags sponsored by Wildcat LLC before heading into the show.



Attendees chatting and networking in the Greenville convention center lobby. Often, business connections and lifelong friendships begin in a casual encounter at an event like this.



Making Sales Simple offers an online training course for shed and carport sales, with beginner, intermediate, and advanced modules.



Graber Post Buildings has been in business for more than 50 years and is a distributor and manufacturer of post-frame and metal roofing supplies and materials.



Cold Spring Enterprises supplies builders everything needed to become a manufacturer of metal carports and garages.



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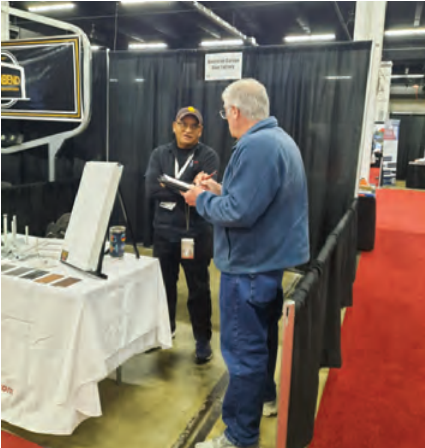
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The Shed Haulers Brotherhood

A Business Organization with Helping Hands

BY LINDA SCHMID

Hurricane Helene was a hurricane that devastated areas across the southeastern part of the United States in September 2024, the deadliest to strike the U.S. mainland since Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana in 2005. Helene is reported to have caused hundreds of deaths and billions of dollars in damages.

When the Shed Haulers Brotherhood, headquartered in South Carolina, heard from others, or saw for themselves, what the devastation was like how many people were left without homes, without cars, with businesses destroyed, with employers gone, leaving them with no job to help them get through this horrific event, they thought they had to help. They decided people would be better off with sheds to live in rather than being out in the cold. Shed donations began.

Helping People

Sam Byler, the acting leader of the Shed Hauler's Brotherhood, has been helping with cleanup and getting people sheds. He and his group originally pledged to get 100 sheds to 100 families, couples, and singles. They have now provided more than 400 and they have enough people on the list to take them over 500. At this point, 600 is looking like a realistic goal.

During cleanup in South Carolina, temporary homes were needed and, within 24 hours, they had donations for half of what is needed. Everyone in the industry helped, builders, dealers,



Nothing makes Sam Byler happier than delivering a shed to a family in need of shelter. PHOTOS COURTESY OF SHED HAULERS BROTHERHOOD

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A Westwood Sheds truck hauling two sheds. The shed industry has come together to provide as much help as possible.

rent-to-owners, anyone who could. The sheds are small structures, 8'x16' or 10'x24', but they insulate them, and they are dry places to come in out of the cold. There were some people who had no reserves, elderly, a veterinary service, and a few others who were likely to use these shelters as their forever home, so volunteers made them a little bigger and turned them into cabins.

In Tennessee, trees came down and people lost electrical service. Some were without electricity for long periods of time and people's homes were destroyed. In Tennessee and North Carolina, the earth had been ripped up and when it rained, flooding and mudslides began. Many people lost absolutely everything.

Byler said FEMA came out and issued vouchers for some people to obtain temporary shelter in motels, but sooner or later those vouchers run out. Other organizations have come out to help including Amish groups, some church groups, and others. A group called Get Out of the Cold, in Barnardville, North Carolina, led by Jeremy Barker is building sheds for people. Drivers from Texas, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and all over, have come out to donate sheds.

Handing Out Hope

Even with all this generosity, there are still so many in need and not enough resources to go around. Many people are living in tents in the cold winter weather. When they contact Byler and ask when they can expect a shed/home, he has to say, "I'm sorry, just hold on to hope. We will get to you."

The worst thing is that a crisis like this leaves many people without hope. Sometimes it has resulted in suicide. Seeing this is what inspires Byler to help the hurricane victims. He and his fellow volunteers are trying to give hope.

What Are Shed Homes Like?

"When people get their shed, they walk in and it's snug and warm and clean, you can see in their faces that a little bit of hope has come back to them," Byler said.

The sheds these volunteers are giving people are good shelter; they are insulated, they have decent windows and doors. Most people are using generators to provide electricity and heat, though it's always a struggle to get fuel for them. However, these tiny homes have no running water. Much of the area's infrastructure is gone; sewer systems are washed out and wells are contaminated. If they had plumbing in their homes, there would be nowhere for the waste to go. People are using Porta Potties and incinerating toilets.

The Shed Haulers Brotherhood

Who is this group helping so many people? The Shed Haulers Brotherhood began when, in 2018 or 19, an owner/operator bought a new truck but bad fuel messed up the engine, and the shed haulers on the Facebook page decided to come together and support him and another shed hauler whose new motor went bad. Together the group raised the \$31,000 that they



Cain's Shed Hauling on its way to help two more families.



Shed deliveries have come from all over the United States, and many more are needed.



The sheds don't have running water, and are dependent on generators for power, when fuel is available, but they're a welcome relief from tent camping.

needed to help both. The group then decided to become more formalized, and the original group had 289 charter members.

Some members have come and some have gone, Byler said. He believes membership is now around 250. However, it's not just the brotherhood members who are involved in helping people. They have many followers and people across the industry who have stepped up. In fact, one volunteer said he'd never seen anything like it. Even church groups he's seen have not pulled together and been this committed to helping others.

Helping comes naturally to the Brotherhood. They are committed to helping each other, connecting lenders with industry people, helping each other any way they can. Byler has said that he, as well as others who are helping, all have personal reasons, as well, for doing so. Someone helped them out when they really needed it.

What Now?

Although Byler and other volunteers have done so much, Byler struggles with the knowledge that there are still so many people without homes. He sees some people rebuilding, but NPR gave the number of 120,000 homes destroyed by Helene,



The shed deliveries are urgent, so the work continues into the night.

and Byler figures that just between western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee, there are easily 50,000 people without permanent homes.

Byler hopes that people will be able to put their lives together and move on, but he thinks that eventually, they will have to go back and install water in all these shed-homes.

Several Ways to Help

Volunteers are needed. Byler said there are so many opportunities. Cleanup is ongoing, and his group and others will welcome anyone who offers.

If you can't volunteer, every restoration project needs money. Visit the website below and find out more about the work.

<https://shbrotherhood.org/donate>

If you don't have money to give, Byler asks for your prayers for everyone who has been affected by Hurricane Helene.

GSCB



Many people are still living in tents. Winter can get cold in North Carolina and Tennessee. Hypothermia is a very real, life-threatening danger in these conditions.

Rent -to- Own Best Practices

HOW DOES
RENT-TO-OWN
WORK?

Training
and Clear
Communication
Are Essential

BY DAN BROWNELL

One of the greatest challenges of rent-to-own sales (RTO) in the shed industry is a lack of shed dealer training and knowledge of policies and how RTO differs from financing. They are very different and the laws that govern them are very different.

The Importance of Dealer Training

Without proper training, a dealer may risk unintentionally misrepresenting the requirements and stipulations of an RTO contract, creating potential dealer/ customer conflict later. “The dealer needs to be as educated as possible on what the rules are,” said Shannon Latham, owner of Shed Geek Rentals, and host of the Shed Geek podcast.

It’s much more effective to invest time in training before trying to sell RTO contracts than to wait until talking with a customer and being confronted with questions the dealer can’t answer. If the dealer has to stop his sales process to call a customer service rep to get clarification, it can make the dealer look unprofessional, which can undermine the customers trust in the dealer and potentially lose sales. Being knowledgeable leads to confidence and a polished sales presentation. As one sales pro put it, “Confidence sells!”

It’s also better to do the training upfront because it’s more time efficient and saves trouble in the long run. Mike Groves, a territory manager for Heartland Capital investments, said, “I have some dealers who will call me who have never trained. Just yesterday, a guy called me four or five times in a row who I had offered to train but never had the time. And now he’s wanting the training, but I couldn’t sit down and do it at that moment.”

Groves explained that this hit-or-miss spot training by phone ends up taking a lot longer than if the dealer had just taken the 45 minutes to do a one-on-one training session to begin with. Heartland does offer training videos, but Groves recommends the one-on-one training, as that allows for dealers to ask follow-up questions and get clarification.

Heartland doesn’t require dealers to have the training, but some dealers find out the hard way that they should have had it. For those dealers, Groves said, “Once we give them a login to our system to get in and start doing the contracts, they just go for it. But they find out pretty quickly that they would have been better off with the training. If some information is missing, they get stuck and wonder, how am I supposed to do this or that?”

The training involves more than just filling out the applications and contracts completely and accurately, however. It also

helps them track the status of accounts throughout the contract term.

The Need for Clear Communication and Terminology

Providing the customer with a clear, accurate explanation of the contract is crucial. “Presentation is important, Groves said. “You don’t want to look like you’re trying to deceive anybody. It’s good to tell them up front that this is not financing, and they’re going to pay a lot more for it in the end unless they pay it off early.”

Using the correct terminology is also important. It’s not only the legal and ethical thing to do but can also help prevent misunderstandings that can hurt business later. For RTO, dealers need to use rental terms, not financing terms. Terms for rental contracts include “rent,” “return,” “retrieve,” and “rent credit” (the rent-to-own equivalent of a financing down payment).

Financing terminology includes words like “financing,” “interest rate,” “down payment,” and “repossession.” Repossession is the right term here because, with financing, the customers have partial ownership of the shed as they are paying off their debt. With a rent-to-own contract, however, the customer doesn’t have any ownership of the building at all until the building is completely paid for.

Sam Byler, CEO and president of the Shed Hauler’s Brotherhood, is particular about the wording he tells his drivers to use when they pick up a shed. For RTO pickups, he tells them to say, “I’m here to pick up our shed,” not “I’m here to pick up your shed.” The RTO company had retained ownership the entire time. It never belonged to the customer. Using the precise verbiage “our” makes that point clear.



Salespeople often make the mistake of rushing through the contract and not stopping to explain the details. This is likely to cause misunderstanding and resentment later, which can lead to bad reviews and hurt sales in the long run.



Good dealer training is crucial. If sales reps don’t fully understand the rent-to-own program, they won’t be able to sell it clearly, and they won’t have confidence. Customers can spot the lack of knowledge, which can reduce confidence in the seller and risk losing a sale.

Byler also differentiates the meaning of three words: “return,” “retrieval,” and “repossession.” A “return” takes place when a customer calls and asks for the RTO company to come pick up the shed. A “retrieval” happens when an RTO company initiates the process of getting the shed back. The term “repossession” shouldn’t be used in connection with RTO. That’s a term that applies to financing only because the RTO company isn’t getting ownership back. The RTO company fully owns the shed until it’s completely paid for.

It’s a good, long-term business practice to be open and transparent about both the pros and cons of RTO. Customers who sign an RTO contract fully understanding all the expectations and limitations will be happier and more likely to have a successful transaction and provide positive feedback and good word-of-mouth recommendations. It’s shortsighted to try to rush or pressure clients into an RTO contract just to get a quick sale. That will almost certainly negatively affect the seller’s reputation and eventually cost sales, and will likely lead to higher retrieval rates, which will also reduce profits in the long run.

According to Chase Coble, solution partner for NewFoundRentals, when things go bad in the shed dealer/customer relationship, that doesn’t come back on the RTO company. “What that customer remembers and tells his friends is where he bought the shed. He’s going to say, ‘I went to X shed company, and they put me on a rent-to-own, and they didn’t explain it to me, and I’m mad, and I’m leaving a one-star review.’ Those situations are created by lack of proper training,” Coble said.

It’s also important to talk about the helpful features that RTO offers, Coble added. “That means the dealer explaining



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Financing regulations fall under federal laws and are therefore uniform throughout the U.S., whereas rent-to-own programs are covered by state and local laws that vary widely, so dealers need to be well-informed about what the RTO laws are in their area. Also, it's possible that RTO laws could vary locally between the dealer's location and the customer's home, so dealers need to be aware of that as well.

things like the early payoff options and if you offer 90-days same as cash because there's a lot of customers who will use those things of you tell them about it. But it's very easy just to make the sale and never mention that there are opportunities to pay off early, never mention that if they don't need the shed anymore, they can voluntarily just give it back and stop their payments. Those things need to be explained to the customers so that they get the best overall experience because your reputation, that customer coming back and saying, 'Yeah, I went with these guys, and I did a rent-to-own, and I totally understood it, I had no problems, and about 36 months into my 48-month contract, I was in a stronger financial position, and I was able to call the rent-to-own company, and I did an early payoff. My payments are done, and now I own the shed.' Those are the reviews you want. Properly explaining the program is what leads to these opportunities.'

Coble added that he wants shed dealers to feel comfortable in explaining rent-to-own and that he welcomes his dealers to ask questions when they're unsure about something. "They're sometimes reluctant to bother us with questions," Coble said. "But I would encourage those dealers that, when in doubt, your rent-to-own company would so much rather you "bother them" than not ask. Ask those questions and tell us where

you're feeling like you need more help because we are more than happy to help with those explanations, but we need to know if you're having a problem. So if you think there's something that you're not understanding, call that company up and ask right away. It's going to make your life easier."

It's a wise practice to show the potential customer the total cost of an RTO shed at the full-length of the contract. Dealers can explain that the cost can be lower if paid off early. If the total cost scares off a customer, it likely means that the RTO agreement wasn't a good fit for them to begin with. That doesn't necessarily mean the sale is lost completely. They might feel more comfortable with a financing option because of its lower cost — if they're eligible. If they're not comfortable with either option, it's important to recognize that some customers may be better off without a shed at all than signing a contract that they're not financially able to handle.

Help Customers Learn About RTO Without Embarrassment

Some customers might be embarrassed about their financial situation. Coble suggested helping those customers learn about RTO without shaming them. "In our industry, physical advertising is more important than people think,

so if you have your shed lot and you don't have rent-to-own information out for people who drive by or drive in to see, you might be losing business. There's a certain part of our customer base who would do rent-to-own but who are maybe a little bit ashamed to ask about it because it's like admitting that they don't have all the cash to buy a shed up front. So having that advertising out there where they don't have to ask anybody really helps. That way they know they can buy a shed with less money up front, they don't have to buy the thing outright, and they don't have to crawl into the office and feel like they're begging.

The Legal Aspects of Contracts

Financing regulations fall under federal laws and are therefore uniform throughout the U.S., whereas rent-to-own programs are covered by state and local laws that vary widely, so dealers need to be well-informed about what the RTO laws are in their area. Also, it's possible that RTO laws could vary locally between the dealer's location and the customer's home, so dealers need to be aware of that as well.

“One of the most common mistakes salespeople make is rushing through the lease agreement or skipping over complex terms,” said Chris Winter, owner of A Place for Your Stuff and CarportME Carports. “This approach often leaves customers confused or frustrated. Instead, take the time to guide customers through the document, focusing on clarity and transparency.”

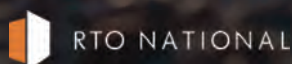
Winter added, “If customers have legal or technical questions, encourage them to review those sections carefully and reach out with any concerns. A transparent and patient approach builds confidence and reduces the likelihood of disputes.”

Conclusion

Rent-to-own programs can account for a large portion of overall shed sales, so it's essential to give them the time and attention they deserve. That means being fully trained and confident in explaining all aspects of RTO. Providing clear, concise information will help the customer and dealer develop a better long-term business relationship, which can in turn boost the dealer's reputation and profits. **GSCB**

A photograph showing the lower half of a person running on a gravel path. The person is wearing dark shorts and light-colored sneakers. The background features a sunset over a landscape with trees and hills, with the sun low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The path is made of dark gravel.

**HIT THE GROUND RUNNING
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Many municipalities, especially in more populated areas, have codes that state where on a property a shed may be placed, including setback requirements, which is the distance between the shed and street, property lines, other structures, etc. They may also state foundation and anchoring requirements. Even if a shed falls under the size limit for a permit, local zoning ordinances and HoAs may still have restrictions on placement.

Site Prep and Foundation Options for Portable Sheds

Laying the Groundwork for Customer Satisfaction

BY COURTNEY C. GLOVER

A portable shed can be a significant investment for a customer. While the quality of materials and construction is very important, the shed setup is just as crucial to ensure its longevity and long-term customer satisfaction. Even the best quality shed will have a dramatically shortened lifespan if it's installed poorly. To avoid this, a number of factors need to be taken into consideration, including site access, site prep, and choice of foundation.

Site Access

One of the first steps in the sales process with a customer is to determine the size of the shed needed and where the shed is to be placed. If the customer wants to purchase a prefabricated

shed, it needs sufficient access for delivery. If a fence or tree is in the way, for example, the customer will either need to have a plan to temporarily take down and replace the fence, have the trees removed, etc. If that's not feasible or cost effective, then the customer will need to have the shed built on site.

Shed Placement

Many municipalities, especially in more populated areas, will have codes that state where on a property a shed may be placed, including setback requirements, which is the distance between the shed and street, property lines, other structures, etc. They may also state foundation and anchoring requirements. Even if a shed falls under the size limit for a permit, local zoning ordinances and HoAs may still have restrictions on placement.

If electricity or water hookups are needed, the permit will need to allow for that and their proximity to utilities will need to be considered. And of course, the property owner should be sure to call 811 to have the area checked for underground utilities before digging. Not having all required permits in place can result in stop work orders and fines, slowing down or canceling a project along with potentially making it difficult to get approval for future projects, so customers should also have this process completed before purchasing a shed.

Once all necessary permits have been obtained, the customer and delivery company will need to verify that the path from the property access point, such as a driveway or alley, has enough maneuvering space for the shed to be moved into place and that the access path is clear to avoid extra work or delays when delivering the shed. Additionally, when planning the location of a shed, especially in a small yard, the customer will need to plan for adequate space for clearance on all four sides of the shed to allow room for setup.

Anthony Mitchell, president of Outdoor Options (OutdoorOptions.com) offered these helpful tips to guide customers: “Think about gates, fences, and trees. Also think about overhead obstacles like power lines or low hanging limbs. Tight spots and turns are fine. We can handle hills and slopes but some retaining walls will require additional equipment. Mark any underground obstacles like septic tanks or old stumps and water or electric lines.” He added, “If you are hoping to cover up your dog’s favorite bathroom paradise, then please give it one last clean up before getting your new structure delivered. If you have to do some clearing and brush burning to get your building where you want it, make sure any ash is removed and there are no hot spots left under your new structure. And finally, “If you poured a slab, please take the form boards off so we can get a good tight fit.”

Jeannie Kontis of Fox Country Sheds said, “Very often, customers underestimate the role of a proper foundation. We believe it is our job to explain to them the importance of proper site preparation for the long-term durability of their shed. They don’t often have the tools, nor the knowledge to prepare the site themselves, and we often recommend that they use a professional to do the job. We also urge them to check their local regulations, such as zoning and setback requirements, which can easily complicate the site preparation process, especially if customers are unaware of them.

“The biggest challenge is the customer who underestimates the importance of a level and well-prepared site and either does it themselves without the proper tools and knowledge or hires someone (sometimes even a buddy or family member) who is also not professionally trained. Those customers who cut corners on preparation often find problems later on, such as uneven settling. We try to prevent these issues from arising by provid-



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Crushed stone, commonly called “gravel,” is relatively inexpensive and simple to install, can be used to level out uneven ground, and provides good drainage. According to Site Prep (siteprep.com), gravel pads are the best choice for most situations. Many shed manufacturers recommend a gravel base and some manufacturer warranties require it.

ing the service through a reputable excavator whom we trust to do the job well for our customers. We also offering a site prep instructional diagram to help the customer who feels confident in preparing their shed site themselves.

Kontis added these tips:

“Education: It’s important to educate the customer early in the process with a detailed explanation of the importance of a properly prepared and level pad. Nobody wants to get a call from the customer who can’t open their doors because the shed has settled so badly.

Transparency: We find it is important to be upfront about the timeline needed for site prep, including any potential delays due to inclement weather, etc. We explain that the shed construction timeline is separate from the site prep timeline, and they might not be completed at the same time. But of course, the pad will always be done before the shed gets scheduled for delivery.

Local Regulations: We encourage all customers to check with their local municipality about a shed permit, as well as any HOA restrictions. They certainly don’t want to start a site prep or shed delivery in an area that would cause issues with the regulations.

Support: Offer a list of reputable local excavators for a proper site preparation if the customer wants to shop around. Or, provide a quote for our in-house excavator to do the work, which we will warrant is done correctly.

By being proactive with information, we can minimize surprises for our customers and assure the longevity of their shed foundation.”

Foundation Options

There are a number of commonly used shed foundations, each with pros and cons. An important factor to consider is to ensure that the foundation type used doesn’t void the manufacturer’s

warranty and that it meets local zoning and permit requirements. Regardless of foundation choice, the site should be properly prepped by removing tree roots, rocks, and vegetation, which can interfere with creating a flat, consistent, and solidly packed foundation.

Gravel With a Pressure-Treated Wooden Frame

Pros: Crushed stone, commonly referred to as “gravel,” is relatively inexpensive and simple to install, can be used to level out uneven ground, and provides good drainage.

Cons: Gravel may shift over time, which can reduce the stability and structural integrity of the shed. It may not be stable enough for heavier sheds, and the pressure-treated wood frame may eventually rot. The gravel is in direct contact with the shed, which limits air flow underneath, allowing shed base rot to occur faster, and creating easier access to rodents and other animals.

According to Site Prep (siteprep.com), a company specializing in preparing sites for shed installation, gravel pads are the best choice for most situations. The site says, “Crushed stone (or ‘gravel’) shed foundations are the best all-around shed foundation option. While various shed foundation types are available, crushed stone foundations provide the best combination of affordability, durability, and ease of construction. In fact, many shed manufacturers now recommend or require a crushed stone base for their buildings, with some shed companies even making their warranties contingent upon it.”

Site Prep also explains why the term “gravel” isn’t really accurate. “Gravel actually refers to round river stone, which is not suitable for a foundation. Our shed foundations are built with crushed stone. Crushed stone is ideal for a shed foundation because its uneven shape allows it to be tightly compacted into a firm base, while still allowing water to drain away from the shed.” The site recommends “3/4” clean stone,” which is what the company uses for all its shed foundations.

Site Prep recommends that a crushed stone foundation be a foot larger than the shed all the way around it. “A gravel shed foundation should extend 12” past your shed in each direction. For example, a 10’x12’ shed would require a 12’x14’ gravel shed foundation. The situation is different for a concrete foundation, however. “If you’re going with a concrete pad and your shed doesn’t have a floor, the foundation should be the same dimensions as your shed.”

While crushed stone is one of the most widely used and recommended options, others include the following.

Pavers

Pros: Pavers are relatively inexpensive and easy to place. They don’t require a treated wood frame to hold them in place, and they allow water drainage.



Pavers are relatively inexpensive and easy to place. They don’t require a treated wood frame to hold them in place, and they allow water drainage. They will shift over time, however, reducing shed stability and structural integrity. They’re in direct contact with the shed, which limits air flow underneath, allowing shed base rot to occur faster, and creates easier access to rodents and other animals.

Cons: They will shift over time, reducing shed stability and structural integrity. They’re in direct contact with the shed, which limits air flow underneath, allowing shed base rot to occur faster, and creates easier access to rodents and other animals.

Plastic Grid Base Filled with Gravel or Sand

Pros: Plastic grid bases are relatively inexpensive and easy to install. They allow good water drainage.

Cons: Plastic grid bases are not well suited for heavy sheds and need careful installation to ensure they’re level and stable. In addition, they’re in direct contact with the shed, which limits air flow underneath, allowing shed base rot to occur faster, and creates easier access to rodents and other animals.

Concrete Blocks

Pros: Concrete blocks are affordable and keep the shed off the ground to allow airflow underneath, reducing access to animals and slowing rot.

Cons: It can take some skill to install blocks square and level. Blocks can shift over time and reduce the shed’s structural stability, especially in areas with unstable soil or in colder climates susceptible to significant frost heave. They’re not well suited for large or heavy sheds, as their narrow footprint makes them susceptible to sinking into the ground.

Pier and Beam

Pros: A pier and beam foundation is cheaper and easier to install than a concrete slab, while still offering stability. It’s a good solution for installing sheds on a slope. It keeps the shed elevated, which allows air flow beneath to slow rot and helps keep pests from entering the shed.

Cons: A pier and beam foundation will require a profes-



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A concrete slab is very stable and can bear heavy weight, so it's the best option for large, heavy sheds. A slab will typically require a permit and is more expensive than other options. In warmer climates, floating concrete slabs, which are slabs without footers, may be permitted, but in colder climates, where frost heave occurs, building codes may require footers, which will increase the cost.

sional to install properly, so it will be a more expensive option. If the piers aren't installed deep enough, they'll be susceptible to frost heave. While a pier and beam foundation is sturdy, it can't handle the weight capacity of a concrete slab.

Concrete Slab

Pros: A concrete slab is very stable and can bear heavy weight, so it's the best option for large, heavy sheds. In addition, the solid slab helps prevent pests from entering the shed.

Cons: A concrete slab will typically require a permit and is more expensive than other options. In warmer climates, floating concrete slabs, which are slabs without footers, may be permitted, but in colder climates, where frost heave occurs, building codes may require footers, which will increase the cost. While a concrete slab is more permanent, that also means more labor and expense to remove it if the owner wants to use that space for something else.

Conclusion

Potential shed customers need to know best practices for site preparation and for foundation options for their unique needs. While crushed stone foundations are widely regarded as an affordable and durable option, other foundation choices, such as pavers, concrete blocks, pier and beam, and concrete slabs, may better suit specific circumstances. Assisting customers with this background information will help them get the most from their shed and create long-term satisfaction with their purchase. **GSCB**



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Find Your Voice

Creating and Maintaining a Brand Voice for Your Company

BY PHILLIP ATWOOD

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You're feeling confident about your company's brand identity. You know what you stand for and the values that make you unique in your marketplace. That's great! But how do you communicate that brand identity to your target audience? And, with so many others vying for consumers' attention, how can you be sure they'll listen? The key is creating a strong brand voice for your company. We'll explain what defines a brand voice and how to fine-tune your brand's voice to sound pitch-perfect to your customers.

What Is Brand Voice?

Brand voice is a simple concept: it's the tone of voice you use to communicate as your brand. That means any written communication — from company newsletters to social media posts to online ads — should use similar words and phrases so that no matter who's speaking on behalf of the company, they present a similar brand tone. But creating and sticking with a brand voice can be trickier than it sounds. Entire marketing campaigns are won and lost on brand voice, and if you're not careful with how you communicate, your voice will start to veer off track.

Brand Voice Example

Buc-ee's is an excellent example of a strong brand voice. This gas station chain is so popular, it has multiple Facebook fan pages. They pair a silly, one-of-a-kind logo with a brand voice that tells jokes, makes puns, and keeps it clean and family-friendly (like their famously sparkling bathrooms!).

The mission isn't that inspirational: they want to provide an exceptional gas station experience for motorists. The company could have chosen to talk about their mission with well-worn buzzwords like "quality," "excellence," and "service." Instead, they created a brand personality that's fun (and often funny). They

still provide quality, excellence, and service, but they do it with style.

Why Does Brand Voice Matter?

People respond to people, not companies. The companies that enjoy stellar popularity have given their company a brand personality. In effect, they've personified their brand. If you can create a brand voice so strong and authentic that people almost start to think of your company as a person, you'll reach new heights of customer loyalty. Clients will sing the praises of your company: your products, your work, and your customer service. Companies don't inspire brand advocates like these — branding does.

How Can I Create a Brand Voice for My Company?

Like gas stations, building companies aren't necessarily warm and fuzzy. They don't, at first glance, create devotion in the hearts of their customers. But if you can amplify your brand from a run-of-the-mill builder to a dynamic, engaging expert who provides quality structures, your customers won't just like your buildings, they'll love your company. And you can do that — with your brand voice.

Remember What Your Target Audience Wants from You

Anyone who's considering your business wants to own a new shed, garage, carport, or other type of building. But your customers want more than that, don't they? They want solid craftsmanship and a company they can trust to deliver a superior product. No matter what kind of brand voice you develop, those elements should still be a part of it. Your mission, your values, your craft — they're all vital to your brand personality. It's the way you communicate them that determines your brand voice.

Consider How Your Brand Voice Could Raise Customer Expectations

Another way to think of your brand voice is to ask, “What else do we offer besides excellent sheds?” Maybe you’re a family-owned business that’s built on tradition. Maybe you prioritize sustainable manufacturing practices. Those elements (called your unique selling propositions or USPs) can help shape your brand voice.

Your brand voice will emerge as you decide what you want to communicate (your values and USPs) and the way you want customers to feel about your brand. Then, just like Buc-ee’s, offer customers a little something extra that fits your brand identity but makes it feel personal and real.

Decide on a Direction for Your Voice

Now’s the time to decide whether you’re playful or professional, whether your billboard ad delivers a pun or showcases your prowess. Builder marketing agencies often use a brand matrix like this one to help their clients define how they’d like to position their branding:

Informal					Formal
Approachable					Authoritative
Fun					Serious
Young					Old
Modern					Traditional
Creative					Technical
Free-Spirited					Reliable
Quirky					Respectful
Accessible					Exclusive
Bold					Understated

Where does your company fall between informal and formal? Between bold and understated? Your answers will help you define a brand voice, and from there, you can apply that voice to all your consumer marketing strategies.

Drill Down into the Details

A brand voice has to sound authentic, and the best way to create a believable brand voice is to hammer out the details. That means considering every little piece of customer-facing correspondence to make sure it sounds like your brand. From your truck wrappers to your website to the “thank you” note you send after every deal you close, your unique voice should come through loud and clear.

How Can I Stay Consistent with My Brand Voice?

Consistency is key when you’re trying to cement your own brand voice in the minds of customers. When you’re happy with the voice you’ve created, make it official by including it in your



documented content marketing strategy. Your voice should inform all your marketing tactics and play a part in all external communication. Your sales team should consider your voice as they reach out to leads, too. Support your sales teams with branded materials that speak in your company voice. Cohesive sales materials will help them look more professional in pitches.

Pro tip: Don’t leave your sales teams out of the branding process! Sales reps are your boots on the ground, who can tell you what resonates with customers. They’re an excellent resource for creating a brand voice that sells.

Assign Brand Voice Owners

If you’re just starting out with your voice, it might be wise to assign a small team (two or three members) as the go-to for brand voice. That team will check every ad, social post, and website page to ensure the voice is unified. As the company becomes more comfortable with your voice, you could extend the team or be more open with how your voice is interpreted. But at the beginning, it doesn’t hurt to keep a close eye on it.

Make a List of Approved Words and Words to Avoid

Write a list of the words you want to use when describing your company. Then, create a list of words you don’t want to use. Both lists are useful when coaching your teams on how to communicate as your brand. Make these available to anyone who creates branded materials or posts for your company. That way, your teams can write and create with a steady, dependable brand voice.

Don’t Give Up

Branding takes time, but if you’ve honed your brand voice and you stick to it consistently, you’ll start to gather a following and inspire customer loyalty. Before you know it, your customers



will be bona-fide brand advocates, telling the world about your craftsmanship, quality, and unique personality. Stay within the boundaries you've created for your voice, but

feel free to have fun, too! And above all, be genuine. Your customers are real people, and they want to connect with the real people behind your company. **GSCB**

Phillip Atwood, founder and principal of Vessel (choosevessel.com), leads a boutique marketing agency that caters to industries ranging from manufacturing to non-profits. With a focus on delivering personalized, custom-tailored solutions, Vessel specializes in branding, website development, and marketing strategies designed to elevate businesses and set their brands apart. With over 20 years of experience in marketing, sales, and technology, Phillip's expertise and infectious positivity are game changers in the marketing world, ensuring no cookie-cutter approach — just personal attention and impactful results for every client.



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Westlake Royal Building Products Introduces Dryroll Universal Ridge Vent and Weather Block

Westlake Royal Building Products™ has introduced Dryroll™, a universal ridge vent and weather block. Designed to safeguard the roof from the elements, the ridge vent solution also helps to exhaust heat and moisture from the roof. With rollable installation, the product blends smoothly with the roof and reduces unappealing field vents and roof penetrations.

“Dryroll ridge vent is a cutting-edge solution, which optimizes roof protection and attic ventilation,” said Steve Booz, vice president, marketing for Westlake Royal Building Products. “It safeguards a roof against the elements while enhancing energy efficiency and energy savings for the homeowner.”

During installation, Dryroll is unrolled and sealed to field tiles; no additional tools or fasteners are needed, and its aluminum sides may be stretched to conform seamlessly to the roof. Equipped with butyl strips, Dryroll effectively seals the ridge and hip areas of the roof, preventing wind-driven rain and snow from entering the peaks and corners of the roof. The product also provides superior airflow and attic ventilation, with 15.6 square inches of ventilation per linear foot, outperforming many other ridge vent options in keeping both the attic and home cooler during hot days and seasons.



Westlake Royal Building Products' Dryroll Universal Ridge Vent and Weather Block is available in two roll options of 11.6" wide 3.7-pound, and 14.4" 4.6-pound rolls.



During installation, Dryroll is unrolled and sealed to field tiles; no additional tools or fasteners are needed, and its aluminum sides may be stretched to conform seamlessly to the roof.

“As a lightweight rollable solution, installation is also both simpler and quicker for contractors,” adds Booz.

Offered in two lightweight roll options of 11.6" wide 3.7-pound, and 14.4" 4.6-pound rolls, the product is easy to handle and transport and meets the design specification set forth in IAPMO ER-2015.

Dryroll ridge vent is designed specifically for use with Newpoint™ Concrete Roof Tile, the durable concrete line known for its superior strength and long-lasting beauty, and with US Tile® Clay Roofing Products, the legacy line of clay tile manufactured to the highest standard of sustainability and craftsmanship. The product is also a key component of the Westlake Royal™ Cool Roof System, a roofing solution designed to reduce a home's energy consumption. The system leverages five components to enhance ventilation and energy efficiency, enabling the home to achieve up to 22% in energy savings annually.

“When used as part of the Cool Roof System, Dryroll allows the roof to breathe so it stays cool in summer and dry in winter,” said Booz.

Ventco by Lakeside Launches ProfileVent2

Ventco by Lakeside, a leader in advanced engineered roofing ventilation, has introduced the ProfileVent 2. The PV2 meets the demands of both resi-

dential and commercial applications. It ensures optimal airflow, protecting roofs and interiors from moisture buildup, heat damage, and other environmental challenges. The innovative design not only enhances airflow but also reduces energy consumption, aligning with modern sustainability goals.

“At Ventco by Lakeside, we're committed to pushing the boundaries of what's possible in roofing technology,” said Ben Oskarsson, Vice President of Sales and Marketing. “The PV2 combines advanced engineering with practical functionality, providing contractors and homeowners with a product that they can rely on for years to come.”

Designed for seamless installation, the PV2 features a user-friendly design that simplifies the installation process while ensuring a secure and durable fit. Its robust construction is tested to withstand extreme weather conditions, ensuring consistent performance and long-term reliability. It also undergoes rigorous quality control checks, ensuring that every unit meets or exceeds industry standards.

In addition to its performance benefits, the PV2 aligns with Ventco by Lakeside's commitment to sustainability. By improving energy efficiency and reducing the need for additional cooling systems, the product contributes to a greener, more sustainable future. The PV2 is made in the USA from recycled materials and is recyclable after use.

Combilift Named Company of the Year at 2024 Business & Finance Awards

Combilift, a leader in material handling solutions, was named Company of the Year at the Business & Finance Awards 2024. Since its founding in 1998, Combilift has built a global reputation as the largest manufacturer of multi-directional, articulated, and sideloading forklifts, as well as large material handling equipment such as straddle carriers, with over 85,000 units in operation across 85 countries.

Martin McVicar, CEO of Combilift, said, “This award reflects the bold vision and relentless drive that has been at the heart of Combilift since Robert Moffett and I started in 1998. Every forklift, every innovation, and every milestone reflects our commitment to pushing boundaries and transforming material handling worldwide. This moment belongs to our employees, our dealers, and our customers who rely on us to deliver quality material handling solutions to optimize their warehouse space.”

Winning this award places Combilift among an elite group of previous winners, including industry giants Primark, Google, and Intel. As a homegrown Irish business with a global footprint, this latest recognition serves as a reminder of the company’s critical role in shaping the future of the material handling industry.

Department of Labor Finalizes Rule on Proper Fit Requirements for PPE in Construction

The U.S. Department of Labor announced that its Occupational Safety and Health Administration has finalized a revision to the personal protective equipment standard for construction. The final rule explicitly requires the equipment to properly fit any construction worker who needs it, improving protections from hazardous conditions.

“I’ve talked to workers in construction, particularly women, who have spoken of personal protective equipment that didn’t fit or was simply unavailable at the jobsite

in their size,” said Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health Doug Parker. “PPE must fit properly to work. I’m proud of the broad support from both employers and unions for OSHA’s efforts to make clear that employers must provide the right PPE for each worker who needs it.”

The revision to the standard adds specific language requiring that employers provide PPE that properly fits construction industry workers. The change aligns the construction industry standard with the standard already in place for general industry.

Many types of personal protective equipment must be sized to fit a worker properly. Improperly sized PPE can be ineffective in protecting workers; create new hazards for the worker, such as oversized gloves or protective clothing being caught in machinery; and discourage use because of discomfort or poor fit. The matter has been a longstanding industry safety concern, particularly among some women as well as among physically smaller or larger workers.

PLIB Publishes New Edition of Grading Rules

Many updates are included in the newly released “WCLB Standard Grading Rules for West Coast & Imported Softwood Lumber, No. 18, 2024.”

The Pacific Lumber Inspection Bureau (PUB) has published a new 2024 edition of its grading rules book, WCLB Standard Grading Rules for West Coast & Imported Softwood Lumber, No. 18, 2024. The new rule book replaces the 2022 version and includes many updates and improvements from the previous edition.

PUB is recognized by the American Lumber Standards Committee (ALSC) as a lumber grading rules-writing authority. No.18, 2024 edition is the second major revision to the rule book since the PLIB/WCLIB merger.

“The new rule book includes all updates to the NGR grade rules as well as revisions to other grades specific to

the WCLB rules,” said Jeff Fantozzi, PLIB’s president. “There are also several improvements to make the book easier to navigate and the coil bound covers more tear resistant. We put a lot of thought into making functional improvements.”

Among the most significant changes are the inclusion of the latest revisions to the National Grade Rule (NGR) interpretations and WCLB rule interpretations. No.18, 2024 also features significant changes to the E-Rated Structural Laminations grade (para. 154), updates to MSR grade rules (par.135), revisions to the Alternative Beams and Stringers rules and Alternative Posts and Timbers rules (para. ALT 130 and ALT 131) and their interpretations, updated design value tables, and the addition of several new imported species from Sweden, South America, and Japan. Fantozzi said the 2024 edition also added helpful graphics inside the cover pages illustrating knot, hole, and slope of grain for common 2x4 grades, paragraph indexing on each page, and corrections from previous editions.

USLBM Acquires Walker Lumber & Supply and Goodrich Brothers

US LBM, a distributor of specialty building materials, has acquired Walker Lumber & Supply, a building products distributor in Nashville. Founded in 1949, Walker Lumber & Supply offers an extensive line of specialty lumber and hardware to residential and commercial builders, contractors, and DIYers, across central Tennessee. Recognized as Dealer of the Year by LBM Journal in 2023, Walker Lumber & Supply is the first Tennessee location for US LBM.

US LBM has also acquired Goodrich Brothers, Inc. located in Pewamo, Michigan. Founded in 1984, Goodrich Bros. provides millwork, stairways, interior and exterior doors, windows, and hardware to residential and commercial builders throughout Michigan. US LBM now operates 17 locations in Michigan as part of its Zeeland Lumber and Standard Supply & Lumber division.

Custom Shed

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This custom shed was built by the homeowner to his own specs so he would have full control of the materials, color, and build. Being in the door business, he wanted the shed to have a sectional door. He said he overbuilds everything and even built the trusses with a steeper roofline than commercially available and with a loft to store duck decoys.

Because he has construction skills, he was able to build it himself (although he did use a professional garage door installer). He also saved money on materials because he had framing lumber and plywood sheathing left over from COVID-19, when he had difficulty getting doors in a timely manner. He had been forced to build temporary enclosures for some projects for which he couldn't get doors soon enough. "Thankfully, those days are long gone! I pray we never see days like those again," he said. **GSCB**



The Details:

Location: Holmen, Wisconsin

Specs: Custom stick-built, 2"x4" stud framing, 16" on center

Size: 8'x10'

Roof: 36" x 12" Pro-Rib steel panels, charcoal gray

Roof Pitch: 6/12

Foundation: Treated 2"x6"s on concrete blocks

Floor: 3/4" treated plywood

Walls: 1/2" CDX plywood, wrapped with Blockade house wrap and sided with vinyl siding CDX plywood

House Wrap: Owens-Corning

Siding: Vinyl 3/4" treated plywood floor

Fasteners: Grip-fast vinyl siding nails using Pasilode nail gun. Pro-Snap steel roofing screws, charcoal.

Door: Haas Door, American Traditions 9642 in Graywood

Insulation: Polyurethane foam on door

Windows: Apple Outdoor Supply, 14"x27" flush mount, black

Ventilation: Pro-Steel soffit

2025 CSI Survey Results Are In

The survey for the 2025 CSI-Annual & Market Report is closed and we are coming through the results.

The first statement is that we are making progress. This year, we have over 500 respondents, which is approximately a 40% increase over last year. More respondents equals better and more usable data, so PLEASE SHARE OUR SURVEYS! The data is all available free to subscribers, so help us help you be successful.

GENERAL BUSINESS SENTIMENT IS UP COMPARED TO 2024

32% of respondents thought 2024 would be better than 2023. For 2025, that number increased to 38.8%. Fewer people predict a decline for 2025, and fewer people also stated they are “Unsure.” So sentiment is positive, and there is less uncertainty about 2025.

THERE WERE MARKED DIFFERENCES BASED ON THE PRIMARY AREA OF CONSTRUCTION

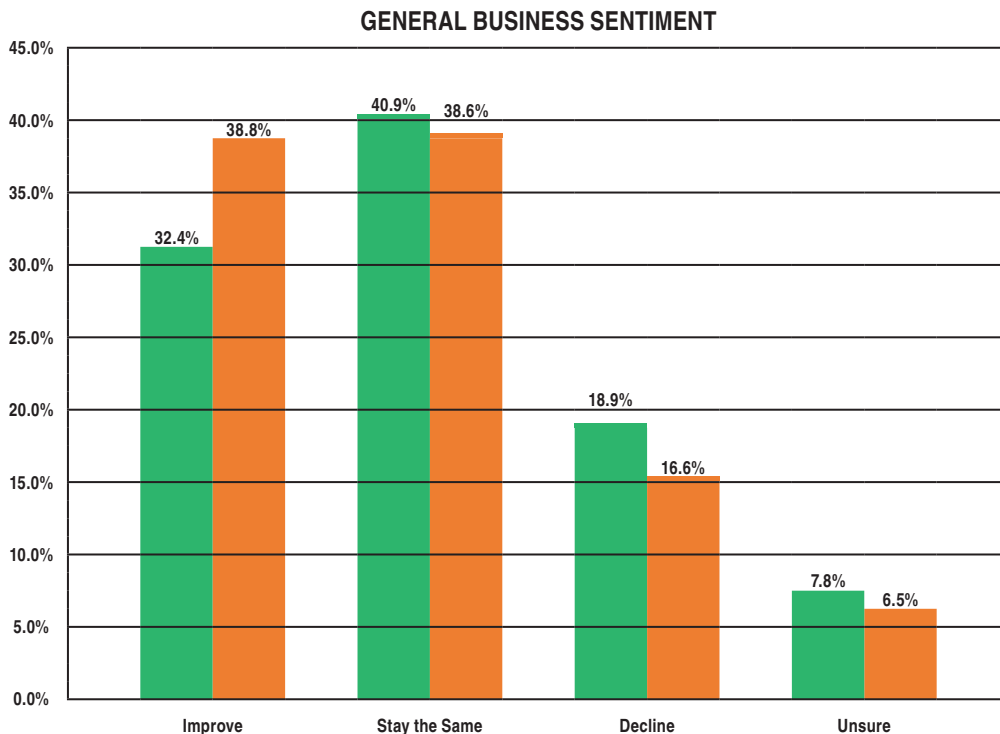
Roll formers had the most positive outlook. 50% of roll formers believed business in 2025 would improve. This was followed closely by metal roofing (43.2%), sheds and portable buildings (42.9%), and general roofing (41%).

Interestingly, roll formers were the only category with 0 respondents saying they were uncertain or there would be a decline.

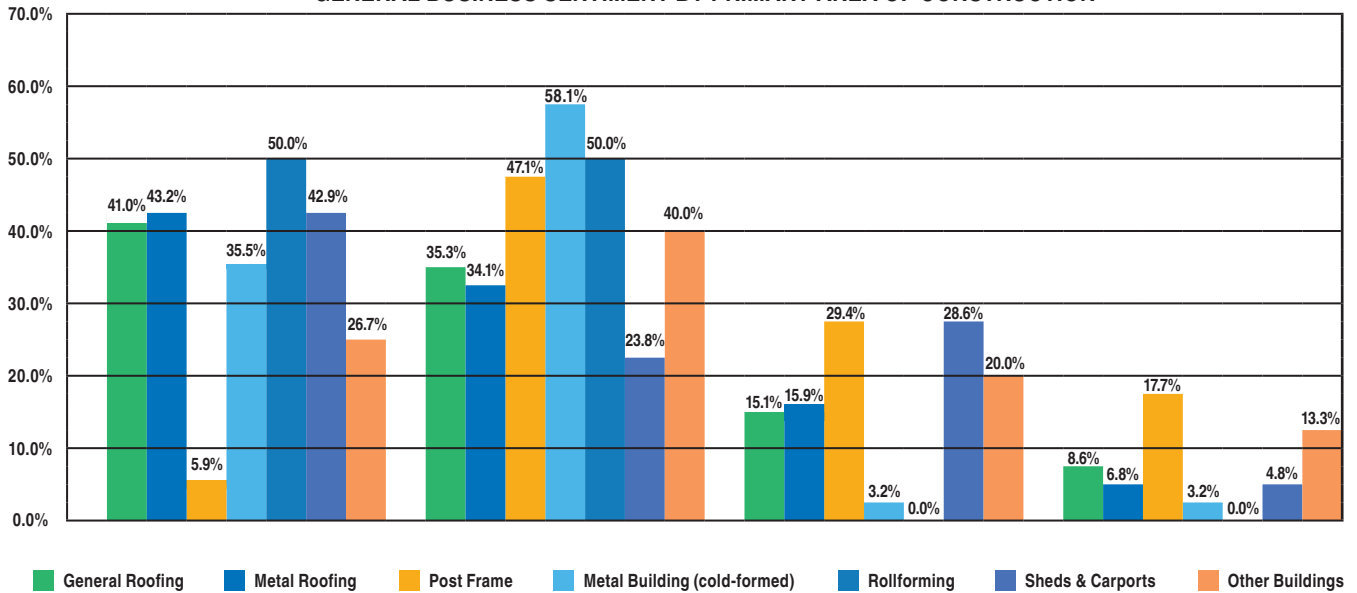
Cold-formed metal buildings are anticipating a generally good year. 58.1% said 2025 would be like 2024. Combining this with 35.5% looking for an increase, that makes 93.6% who say 2025 will be the same or better than 2024.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION HAD MINIMAL IMPACT ON OUTLOOK.

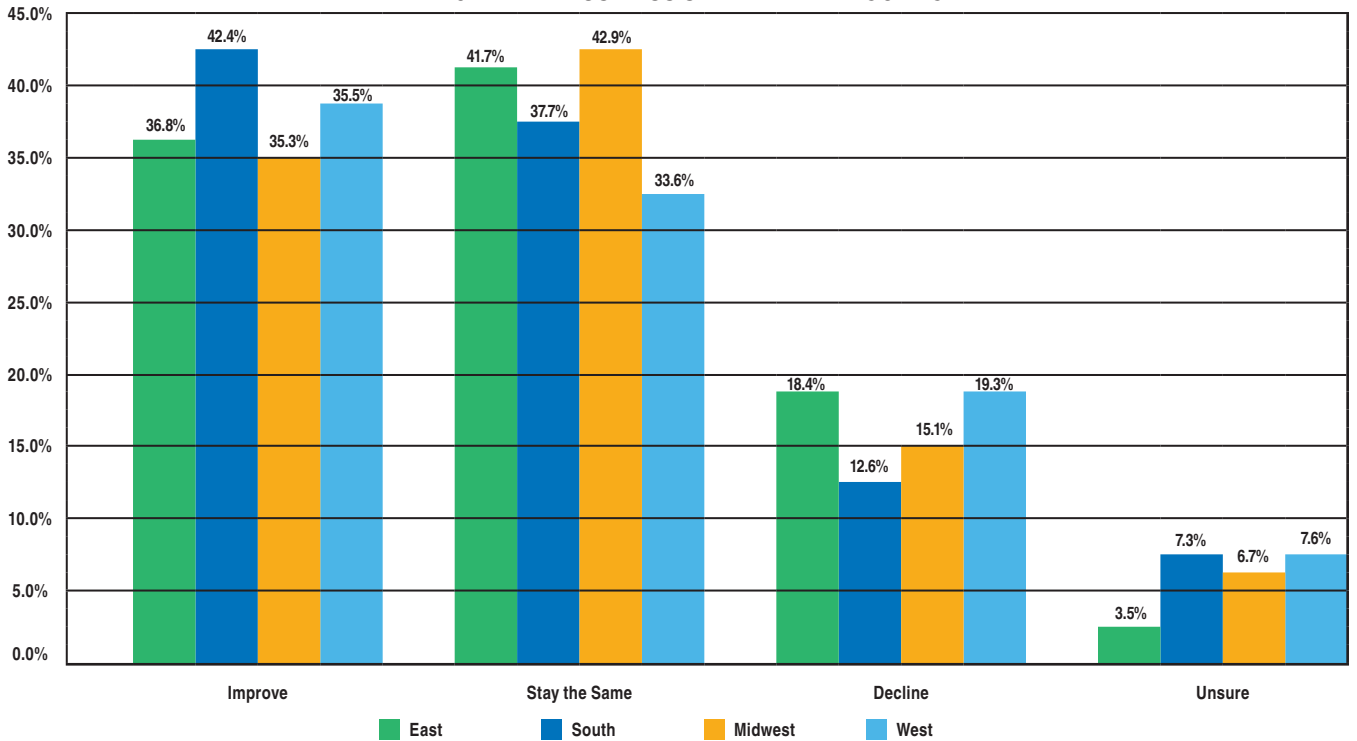
All regions had similar opinions about 2025. 35-42% are



GENERAL BUSINESS SENTIMENT BY PRIMARY AREA OF CONSTRUCTION



GENERAL BUSINESS SENTIMENT BY LOCATION



predicting an increase. 33-42% are predicting the same. 12-20% are predicting a decrease. In all cases, the spread is less than 10%.

THE POSITIVE OUTLOOK FOR 2025 IS COMING OFF A REASONABLY GOOD YEAR

45% reported increased gross sales and number of units sold for 2024 vs 2023. 40% reported an increase in profitability vs. 2023.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE OF 2025

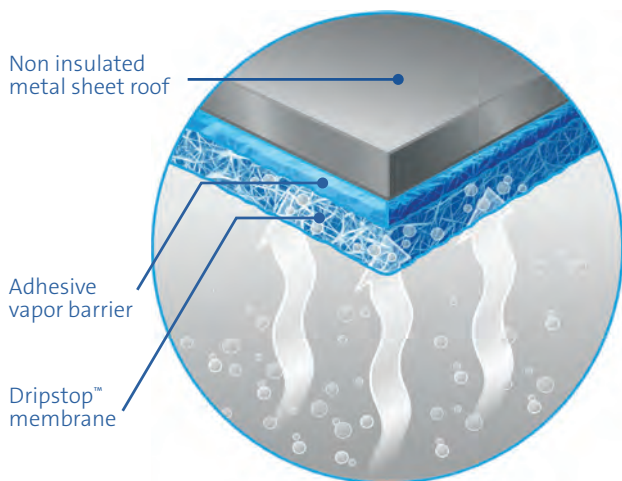
The number one concern by a fair margin was cost of materials (51.4%), followed by inflation (33.9%), and taxes (27.0%).

2025 is looking like it might be a good year. More detailed information will be available when the 2025 CSI – Annual & Market Report is released in the spring. Please share the information, share the surveys, consider sponsoring a section, and help us get you the information you need to make good business decisions. If you are interested in sponsoring a section, email gary@shieldwallmedia.com. **GSCB**

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