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**METALCON**  
**PREVIEW**

## MANAGING TO SUCCESS

- **PRODUCT FEATURE:**  
Roof Panels
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# Managing To Success

Running a metal roofing company is tough.  
Here is what some successful businesses are doing to run their operations smoothly.

By Sharon Glorioso

**D**ay-to-day operations at metal roofing companies may seem pretty standard to an outsider, but in order to keep the daily grind running smoothly and successful there are a lot of key efforts that competitive metal roofing companies do to stay on top of managing their business.

## Communication Is So Important

Castro Roofing, based in Dallas, Texas, specializes in metal roofs and low-slope membrane roofing systems (modified, BUR, restoration and some single-ply). Rudy Rodriguez, CEO of Castro Roofing, says that the company's main focus and mission is to extend their client's roof life by providing accurate and honest data to help them make smart roofing decisions along with effective roof maintenance programs.

Rodriguez says that open communication throughout the company is key. "I am a leader who believes in open communication. I believe in communicating genuinely and with conviction. As a general rule, more communication is better than less, and sooner is better than later," he said. "I also believe you can learn the most, and improve the most, by engaging in candid, meaningful conversations with other people at all levels."

When managing his metal roofing company, Castro expects his employees to be open and minimize any human defensiveness they may feel. And when employees are wrong, he expects his employees to willingly admit it as soon as



Rudy Rodriguez,  
CEO of Castro  
Roofing



Castro Roofing typically averages about 80 to 100 employees, and management averages more than 15 years of experience.

they suspect it and when they are sorry about something, you should say it. "I lead by example by these."

Rodriguez also says that he tries to give his employees constructive feedback with his best intentions for the individuals, his team, and his company with their mission in mind. "You can expect me to spend time in all areas of the company and to ask [his employees] 'What can I do differently to serve you and be a better leader?'"

Gary Engle, production and quality supervisor with VMZINC, headquartered in Raleigh, North Carolina, says that VMZINC works with roofing companies of all sizes, from the second largest roofing company in the United States, all the way to the smallest company. He says that strong communication is very important when working with each individual company as well.

"We have a very positive working relationship with the roofing companies. We are here to make sure they are success-

ful, from technical support to additional training as needed," Engle said. "With notable projects in every major sector, including residential, historical, cultural, educational, municipal and more, VMZINC acts as a partner with roofing companies in order to meet their expectations in terms of products and services. With in-house panel production, we are able to offer size, scale and color options only limited by one's imagination. As a result, our relationships are the strongest in the business."

## Managing And Finding Top Employees

Castro Roofing typically averages about 80 to 100 employees, and managers average over 15 years of experience. "Some of them have been with us over 20 years," Rodriguez said.

To find his employees, he said varies, but some of the foremen that currently work at Castro Roofing that have been



there for more than 20 years, were found at material distributors. Others, such as several estimators and project managers, were found through recruiting agencies and word of mouth.

“We are currently creating a hiring system that will help sustain the culture and our aggressive growth plans,” Rodriguez said.

He also says that his company manages its workforce with ease. “The best way to manage is to create a shared vision—culture+values+mission—that attracts, neuters and engages a certain type of individual that will love and thrive in that type of environment,” Rodriguez says.

“By hiring team members that fit our culture first and second, making sure that they have the experience, skills and wisdom to deliver a great experience to our client—the Red Carpet Experience—the traditional management style is minimized. Our company is managed by principals first, supported by systems and controls,” Rodriguez said.

## Find A Style That Works

Rodriguez says that his company leads by example and management is done very fairly and they treat their employees well.

“Leadership is about creating an environment that brings out the best in people, executing on goals, and making each client, individual, the team and company successful,” Rodriguez said.

## Castro Roofing's Style Of Leadership

Rodriguez and his management team leads Castro Roofing with some basic tenets under which they operate, that include:

- “I am a leader who believes in service, purpose and strategy. I believe leadership is serving others, and working with others to achieve a meaningful mission. I promise to lead by having a positive vision, painting it clearly for others and providing a sense of purpose in our work. I believe in the power of difference in moving the world forward, so I seek goals and strategies that are clearly different than others and focus intently on



CREDIT: CASTRO ROOFING

The CEO of Castro Roofing, Rudy Rodriguez, leads by example and the company's management is done fairly.

optimizing those.

- “Because of these beliefs, you can expect me to build things with others—things that are positive, different, valuable and lasting, and demonstrate alignment of purpose and values in all things.

- “I am a leader who believes in values. I believe solid values create strength, consistency and sustainability. The values that are most important to me are: character—doing the right thing, even when it is a struggle. Genuineness and transparency—letting others see your true self and a zeal to get to the truth the quickest. Fairness—providing both opportunities and rewards based on merit. Progress—always moving forward. And grit—getting it done, regardless of obstacles.

- “Because of these values, I also have ‘hot buttons.’ These hot buttons are affectionately known as ‘Rudy’s Triggers,’ and

include: gossip, egos that hurt our clients and team, bullying, including reckless, or unfair statements demeaning others’ work product or integrity; obstructive and opaque behavior, including withholding information for personal advantage, and things that are done in secret or with hidden agendas; and sloppiness, including repeated mistakes, thoughtless work, and not meeting deadlines while not communicating that fact in time to adjust.

- “I am a leader that believes in self-awareness and strengths-based philosophy. I believe self-reflection and constructively acting on it are the best source of mature growth. For example, I believe I am good at spotting trends, risks and opportunities in confusing data points and acting on them. I am not as good, however, in spotting risks and opportunities in futuristic things,



CREDIT: VMZINC AND GILBERTSON PHOTOGRAPHY

Pictured here is a metal roofing project that VMZINC recently completed.

## COVER STORY

where the data has yet to be formed. As a result, you should expect me to help you find what you are good at, and harvest that, and coach you to find resources to augment your shortcomings. You should also expect me to behave the same way for myself.

• “I am a leader who believes in team, action, learning, winning...and being darned good at what you do. I believe in assembling a group that consists of talented individuals that are cohesive, have extreme clarity of purpose and is even more powerful as a team. My vision: If I

should go into a coma for a year, you will miss me, but not miss a beat. In our daily work, I expect we will set high standards, work hard for the greater good, openly enjoy what we do, and celebrate success. I believe that we are all winners and all want to work on a winning team.

• “I also believe in calculated risk taking... and then managing risks well once they are taken. I know we will make mistakes, and all the things we try will not work, but expect we should take special care to learn from our failures.



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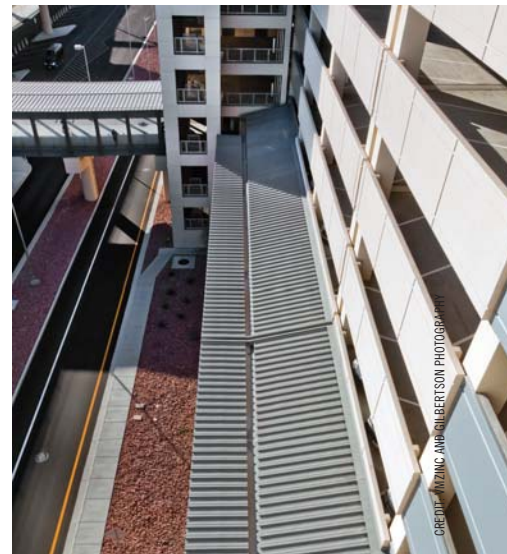
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VMZINC works on many commercial and residential metal roofing projects.

• “I am a leader who believes in well-being and an integrated life. I believe in leading a full, healthy life, and integrating career, family, community activities and personal wellness (physical, mental, psychological and spiritual) in a way that allows us to prioritize what is most important at that moment. In doing so, I believe we all will enjoy happier, more productive lives and the return for the company will be many fold. Because of this belief, and because we have built a strong team to support it, you can expect me to put our personal well being and family urgencies before the company's routine business.”

### Take Advantage of Training Programs When Available

Management and training programs



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are available at some companies and even mandatory.

“At VMZINC, professional development is critical to our success. Technical and customer support training are mandatory for all employees,” Engle said.

Since the company participates in

projects of all sizes, including both residential and commercial, it is important for employees to be well educated and knowledgeable on all forms of different projects.

“VMZINC’s one-day wall and two-day roofing training program that are

required before purchasing and installing our zinc, technical service and customer service are what set us apart from our competitors,” Engle said.

## Flexibility Is Essential

According to Daniel Nicely, managing director at VMZINC, being flexible and easy to work with is important.

“Flexibility is essential,” Nicely said. “Each individual project requires an adaptable approach, as opposed to hard and fast. Each project is different, and the dialog that occurs is a multifaceted conversation—not a singular voice. While we try to establish and maintain procedure and protocol for our actions, the conversation with the metal roof company [the customer] and the specifics of an individual project will determine everything from our terms to our schedule. We find this to be key in order not only to win business, but also to maintain it. We can’t win or retain them all, but a strict rote methodology will not aid our attempts in our experience as the world leader in architectural zinc.”



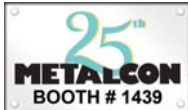
Daniel Nicely,  
managing director  
at VMZINC-US

## Successful Management Is A Win-Win

In the end, Rodriguez said that successful management and happy employees makes for a successful business. “Our shared vision guides all team members on how to treat our clients and each other. It is based on principles with minimal rules,” he said.

“We delight and create royal clients. We provide the best roofing experience they [our clients] have ever seen. It all starts with having team members that genuinely care about the success of our clients not just installing a good roof,” Rodriguez said.

“We [Castro Roofing] live by this simple math equation: happy employee = happy client = happy company owner,” he said.



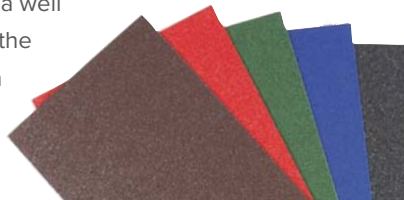
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# Managing To Success: A Company Profile



Pictured is one of B&B's projects—the NY Mercantile Exchange, built in the late-1880s, in downtown Manhattan—with copper plate and hot rolled steel.

## B&B Sheet Metal: An In-Depth Look

B&B Sheet Metal, Inc. in Long Island City, New York, is one of a handful of American companies working with copper, stainless steel, freedom grey & lead coated copper, galvanized steel, zinc and aluminum to craft custom ornamental components like cornices, cupolas, finials and dormers for a single roofing restoration or for mass produced assemblies.



Robert Baschnagel III, B&B Sheet Metal owner

B&B began in Whitestone, New York, in 1901 when William Baschnagel established Baschnagel Roofing & Sheet Metal Co. with four employees in a 2,500 square foot warehouse making, among other things, the ticket racks for the Schubert Nederlander theaters in New York and Yankee Stadium. Robert Baschnagel Jr. (Bob Sr.) and his son, Robert Baschnagel III (Bobby) transformed the company into a success by implementing new techniques and strategies to elevate the classic traditions of metal working into a new realm

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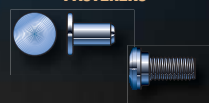


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## COVER STORY

of competition. Today, B&B occupies three buildings with over 30,000 square feet of space in Long Island City, Queens, New York. Bob Sr. and Bobby have been, respectively, president and vice president since 1996. The company is an interesting blend of modern metal making technology and old world craftsmanship.

Their equipment includes six computerized brakes, one 26-foot long computerized brake and a water jet. Among the brakes, is an ANSI-SPRI roof edge testing ES-1 machine.

### Training Is A Priority From The Start

Yet, only a few feet away from the technologically sophisticated apparatus are the talented craftsmen working on a custom skylight or a turret to replicate and replace a damaged piece from a 19th Century building in Manhattan. Each member of the production team is

trained from the day they join B&B to provide valued service.

### One-On-One Service

Today, B&B employs nearly 40 craftsmen and field technicians who provide one-on-one service to clients. Each project, whether restoration or new construction, is executed with an artistic precision to ensure the fabrication is on time and on budget.

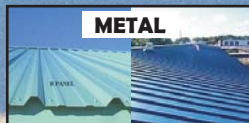
"Any job from roof panels to ornamental cladding needs to have a form of coordination in order for the installation process to be completed smoothly," notes Tom Hessler, technical director at B&B. From the ornamental aspect, B&B creates prototypes of cornices and other exterior wall treatments before creating the final product at their workshops. Over a dozen have been created for historical buildings in the Tri-State area.

Examples? Manhattan's 120-year-old



B&B Sheet Metal employs about 40 craftsmen and field technicians.

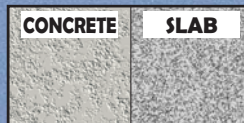
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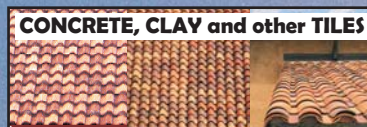
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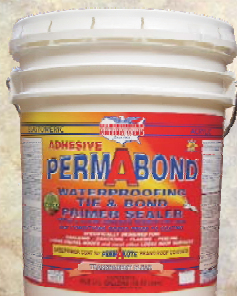
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Mercantile Exchange Building, 16 blocks north of Wall Street and a major center for trade for nearly 100 years. The five-story red brick Queen Anne style building features an imposing off-set tower that had suffered from excessive deterioration and whose top 20 feet of the original clock tower and cupola were fully reconstructed with 1/8 inch copper plate by B&B craftsmen working from 19th Century plans.

Another recent project is The Corbin Building, an historic former office building located at 192 Broadway in downtown Manhattan built in 1888. The building has recently been rehabilitated by the New York Metropolitan Transit Authority as part of the downtown Manhattan Fulton Center transportation center project. It is home to architectural details that simply do not, or could not, exist today. Those include twin office towers with roofs of terra cotta



Each project at B&B Sheet Metal, whether restoration or new construction, is executed with an artistic precision to ensure the fabrication is on time and on budget.

CREDIT: B&B SHEET METAL INC.

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tile removed many years ago and that restorers felt should be rebuilt to restore the aesthetic authenticity and to serve as housing for modern mechanical systems.

"The client had strong requirements in choosing the hand-crafted metal shingles that would replace the original

terra cotta tiles that were atop the towers," explains B&B technical designer Sherzod Diyakhanov. "Recyclability was also an issue in the client's quest to meet LEED project certification," he notes, explaining Kynar-coated metal panels met those requirements more easily than

real terra cotta tiles," he explains. The towers presented some interesting challenges. An apex at the corner at the ridge cap of each tower was redesigned to better fit the tapered shingles and still meet the look of the original plans. The project also features the recreation of eight-foot high flush wall panels made of 20 ounce copper wrapped around each of the terra cotta painted metal towers.

The team, including a second technical designer, John Dogt, also designed a 200-foot long system of 32 ounce copper gutter complicated by 90 degree angles and one side of the roof that was pitched lower than the other, creating two different slopes. The team's solution to compensate for the pitch was to taper sections of the gutter rather than change pitch to stabilize the rainwater flow. This tapering was masked by a copper fascia affixed to the outside face of the gutters which the B&B design team was able to achieve using a series of originally designed twisted brackets, one holding the fascia to the gutter horizontally and the other diagonally. B&B also manufactured the design for a copper ball ornamentation that appeared on the original 1919 gutter and which could be soldered to the face of the gutter to meet stringent requirements for wind resistance.

No specialty job is too small—or too large. A team of project managers will take the time to study an old building, research historical photos, study tax maps and field measure. The company has a full time estimating and design department for schematic, pre-bid and construction phases. Only then, after a precise process, will they start to consider how to create the gutter system, leader head, flashing, façade, etc.

"You will never tire of working here," smiles Hessler. "You will always be doing something valued no matter how big or how small the job. When you're working with a team of project managers who specialize in restoration and renovation and who are challenged every day to come up with a solution for an older structure built with superb craftsmanship, then you know you're definitely going to learn something new before the day is out." **MR**

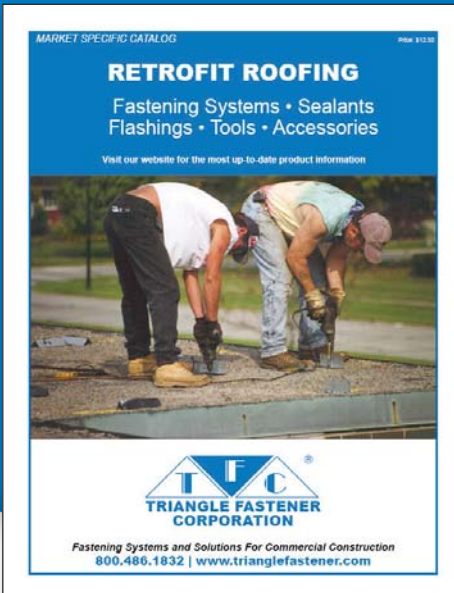
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