

# Modern Metals®

75 YEARS

The magazine for metal service centers, fabricators & OEMs/end users

[www.modernmetals.com](http://www.modernmetals.com)

TREND PUBLISHING METALS GROUP December 2019

## ENERGY FORECAST

STATIC DEMAND KEEPS  
STOCKS TIGHT FOR  
OCTG, LINE PIPE

COIL PROCESSING  
DIVERSIFYING PROCESSING  
TOOLS SELLS MORE STEEL



Since installation, repeatability has improved as the Red Bud line's user-friendly interface allows operators to achieve more consistent product.

## GETTING NOTICED

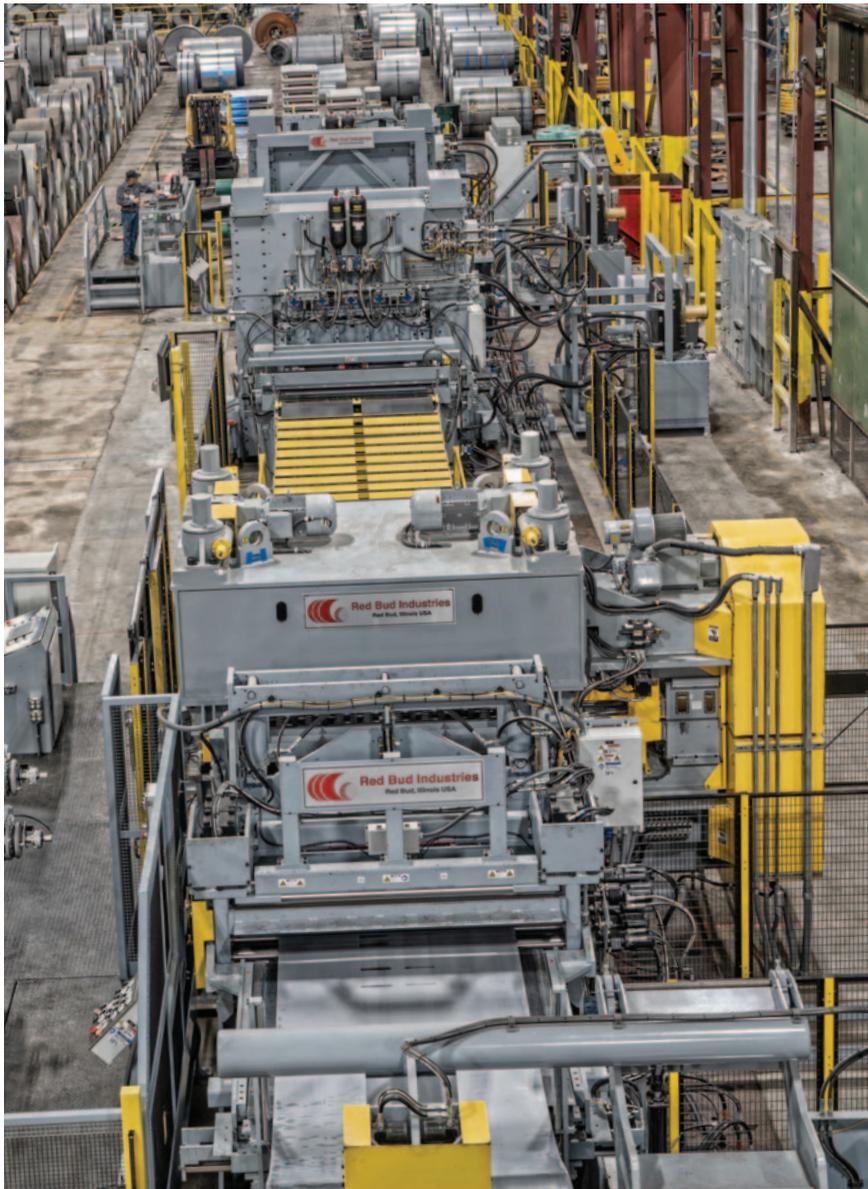
By diversifying processing tools, one service center can sell additional forms of steel

BY GRETCHEN SALOIS

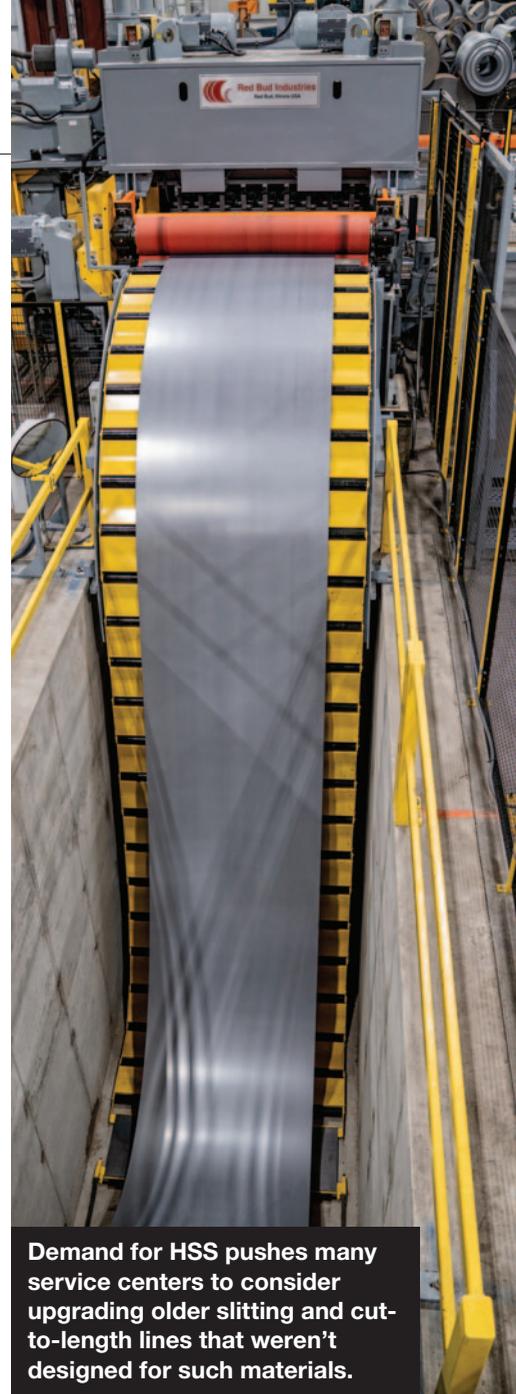
**U**p until Greenpoint Metals Inc. in Franklin, Ohio, put together plans to broaden its operations, “we were a steel service center that could provide slitting

services only,” recalls Mike Caughell, executive vice president. “We turned large coils into smaller coils. But because we didn’t have the capability to process sheet, we knew we were missing out on a big part of the marketplace.”

Caughell learned that some customers would decide against working with Greenpoint because the company couldn’t produce sheets as well as coils. Any sheet Greenpoint was able to sell was outsourced. “So we kicked off our plant expansion and



**Greenpoint Metals had to process 10-gauge material but the tensile and yield strengths were very high. This required the line to incorporate many of the same components Red Bud would typically use in its 0.25-inch lines.**



**Demand for HSS pushes many service centers to consider upgrading older slitting and cut-to-length lines that weren't designed for such materials.**

invested in the line from Red Bud [Industries Inc.],” he says. “Greenpoint’s owners already had a history with Red Bud, and we were comfortable working with them.” The multi-blanking line, which includes a Machine Concepts cassette leveler as well as a stretcher leveler, has been up and running for the last few months.

Along with the plant expansion, Greenpoint doubled its office size and installed a high-density rack system for coil storage complete with narrow aisle tow motors and lift trucks, Caughell says.

### **Adjusting to growth**

Greenpoint has become more flexible fol-

**“WE CONTINUE TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS TO KEEP THE INCREASE IN MATERIALS MOVING ON THE JOB FLOOR.”**

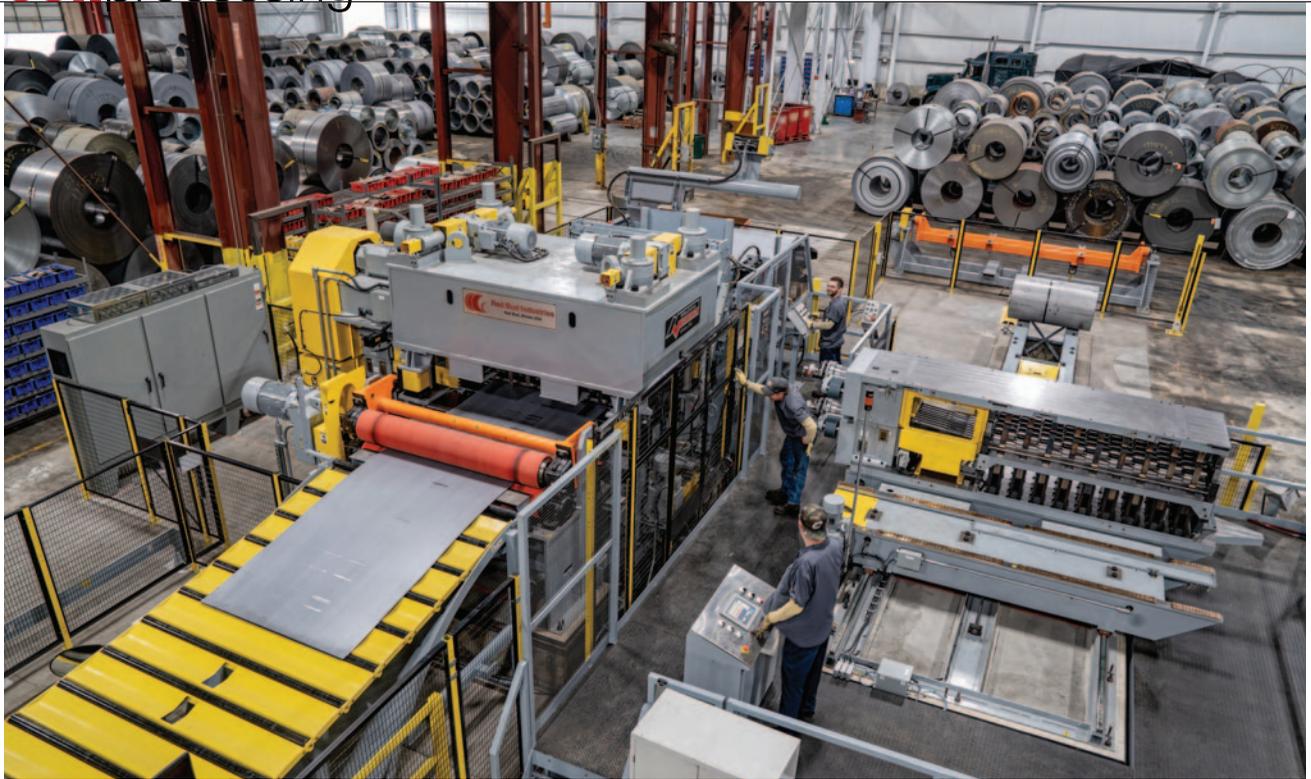
**MIKE CAUGHELL, GREENPOINT METALS**

lowing this investment. “We can better max out our capacity for customers,” notes Caughell. Customers that purchase sheet from Greenpoint have remarked on the improved quality. “Our customers have noticed that we can provide sheet, but also high-quality sheet. The feedback continues to be positive.”

Initial training for line operators takes

about two to three weeks. “It does take some time to be proficient and comfortable,” says Jeffrey Herrell, sales engineer for Red Bud. “Each coil is different and the more experience an operator has, the more efficient they will be.”

Since first installing the line, Greenpoint continues to train employees as capacity rises. “We have several people on



staff who have past experience running sheet machines and, in particular, who have experience with Red Bud. Training is going well,” Caughell says.

Every line Red Bud installs requires extensive planning based on the customer’s facility’s footprint, whether designing a special machine for a specific application or assisting a customer with a processing-related issue. Red Bud also provides technical assistance to its customers for the life of the machine.

The new Greenpoint line allows for cut-to-length sheets as well as the ability to produce close-tolerance blanks. “Red Bud’s multi-blanking feature also allows users to produce smaller blanks more efficiently,” Herrell says. “Greenpoint Metals’ specifications were a bit unique. They were looking to process 10-gauge material but the tensile and yield strengths were very high. This required the line to incorporate many of the same components we would typically use in our 0.25-inch lines.”

Repeatability has improved overall as the machine’s user-friendly interface has allowed operators to produce a more consistent product. “With stretcher leveling, operators simply stretch the material until it lays flat,” Caughell says. “Since the stretcher equalizes trapped internal stresses, when we cut parts with our lasers, there is no metal warping [springback].”

“We are growing significantly so we already have pressure on our existing amenities,” he continues. “As we grow, we now have another way to sell steel. In addition, with our new racking, we’ve been able to create more density, and we continue to make adjustments to keep the increase in materials moving on the job floor.”

### Looking ahead

With new capabilities, Caughell is optimistic about future business opportunities. “We have customers buying from us because we have the stretcher leveler. We have customers that just want sheet,” he says. “Now we’re able to provide these customers this service that is closer to them [geographically] and we have the additional floor space to do it.”

Customers often tour Greenpoint’s operations to see the line before placing an order. “Once they see the line in our clean, organized working conditions,” Caughell says, “that helps sell the job for us.”

The growth of demand for high-strength steels continues but many service centers are running “a lot of older slitting lines and cut-to-length lines that were not designed for the materials we see today,” Herrell says. “This has created an opportunity for new equipment projects as well as retrofit projects.”

As customers require flatter and more stress-relieved material, stretcher leveler

technology has increased in popularity over the last 10 to 15 years, he notes.

Red Bud’s software includes a simplified HMI layout design with dedicated displays for critical information. “Since we write our own programming in house, it gives us greater flexibility when it comes to operator interfaces and the programs that we can offer, which is what helps the operator run the line,” Herrell says.

In order to keep up, Greenpoint’s leaders understand they must be proactive in anticipating future customer needs, which also means acquiring talent. Employee turnover is low at the service center. “We’ve worked to make this a place people can retire from. We’ve also tapped into local high schools” as a potential labor pool, Caughell says.

“Word of mouth has spread that Greenpoint is a good place to work. A lot of companies say they want to grow but we’ve actually invested in making those changes so people can see their potential career here. They can move up and will stay challenged—they won’t get bored.” ■

---

**Greenpoint Metals Inc.**, Franklin, Ohio, 937/743-4075, [www.greenpointmetals.com](http://www.greenpointmetals.com).

**Red Bud Industries**, Red Bud, Illinois, 618/282-3801, [www.redbudindustries.com](http://www.redbudindustries.com).