



## Metal Roofing Gains Market Share

Tom Black, Posted 12/21/2012

It's no secret that many homeowners are planning to stay in their homes longer than ever, choosing remodeling over new construction. A report released earlier this year, "The Remodeling Market in Transition," from the Remodeling Futures Program at the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., concluded "in today's uncertain economic environment, homeowners are likely to focus remodeling spending on projects that improve energy efficiency of homes, generate cost savings and maintain structural integrity."

This is really good news for the metal roofing industry, as our products meet all three of these qualifications. In fact, even in this tough economy, independent McGraw-Hill Construction Research and Analytics data shows the number of residential metal roofs has more than tripled during the past decade, increasing metal's overall U.S. market share from 3 percent to approximately 10 percent.

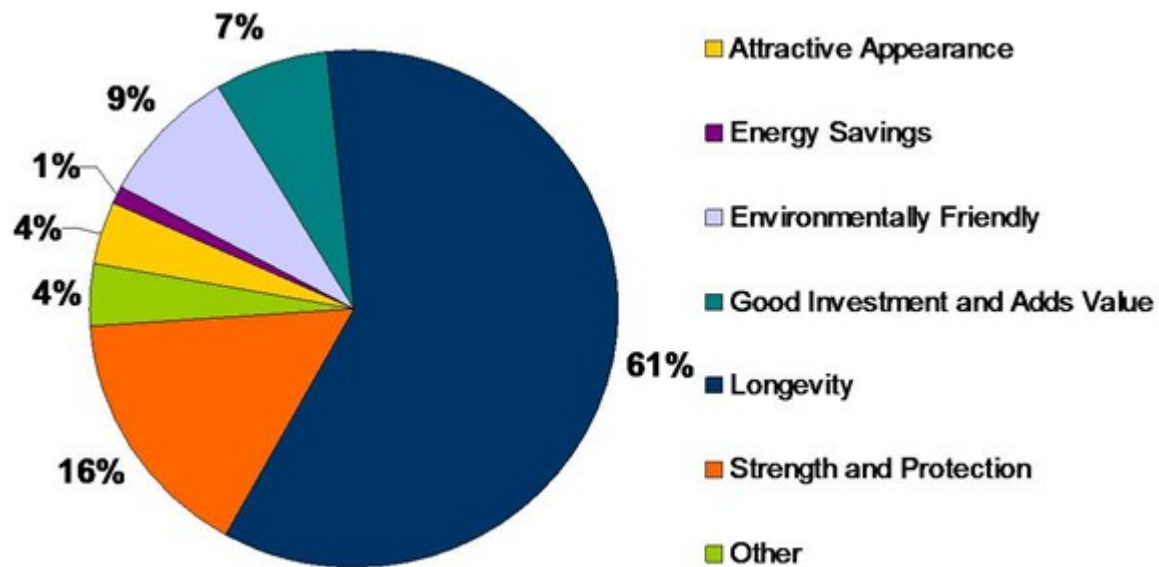
The Metal Roofing Alliance (MRA) is a member-supported coalition of metal roofing manufacturers, paint suppliers and coaters, dealers, metal industry associations, and roofing contractors that pool resources to educate consumers through an

ongoing national marketing campaign. To date, MRA's members, including the top metal roofing manufacturing companies, raw materials suppliers and allied associations, have invested \$25 million to grow the market and support contractors.

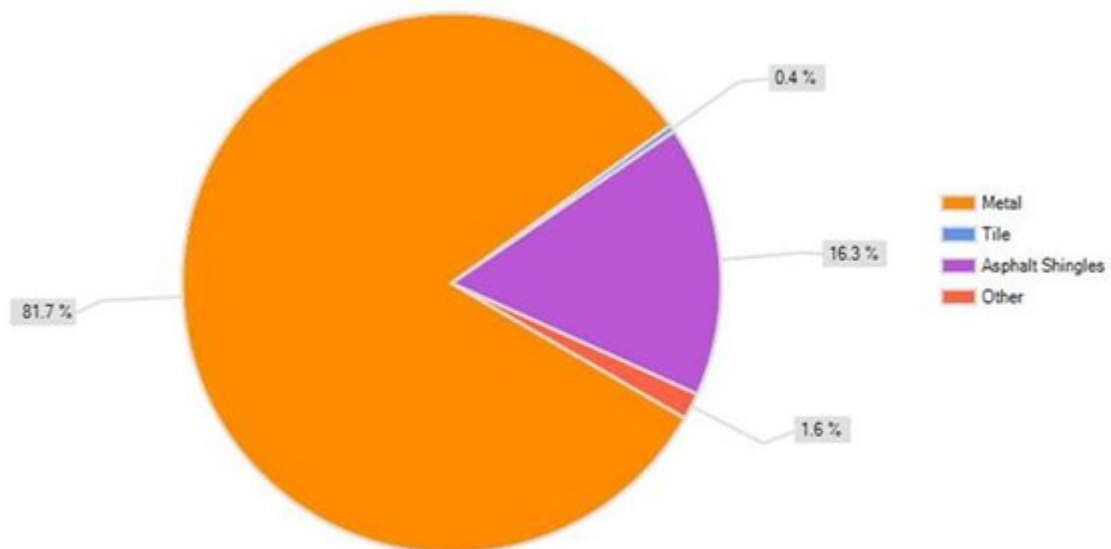
The impact of these efforts is huge. A 1 percent increase in market share for metal roofing results in added sales of 1.5 million squares of metal roofing, utilizing an additional 100,000 tons of steel and 200,000 gallons of paint plus fasteners, underlayment and flashings. In the last five years, MRA has passed on 100,000 consumer leads to contractors, resulting in an estimated \$1.2 billion of contractor-installed sales.

## Documented Growth

A recent analysis of market share figures shows that metal is the one consistent bright spot in the retrofit roofing market. In fact, residential metal has performed better than all other materials tracked by the study.



Roofing Materials Chosen by MRA Consumer Leads



Source: Metal Roofing Alliance Consumer Survey

Between 2003 and 2009, the total residential roofing share in squares for all materials except metal was down more than 21 percent. During that same time, the total metal residential roofing market saw a 14.6 percent increase in squares. That's a huge difference, and we believe it's strong evidence that the MRA program is working.

## Eco-friendly

Perhaps the biggest marketplace factor that's driving metal roofing sales is the sustainable or green building movement. The Metal Roofing Alliance has capitalized on the environmental and economic benefits of its members' products to encourage homeowners to invest in their home.

Advances in coating technology and metal forming have created a new residential market for metal. Many products feature longer-lasting coatings that help save energy, allowing homeowners to reduce their heating and cooling costs. In addition, new metal stamping techniques are producing durable metal shingles that look like wood shake, tile, slate and architectural shingles that will last 50 years or more

It's important to remember that the residential metal roofing industry takes its market share from competing products, such as asphalt and concrete tiles. As a result, all the growth spurred by MRA represents new opportunities, and new revenue for all the companies involved in the product, from steel mills and coil coaters to the contractors who install the metal roofs.

## Track Record of Success

Founded in 1998, a key component of the MRA's national marketing effort is the website, [www.metalroofing.com](http://www.metalroofing.com), with the Find-A-Contractor feature that matches homeowners with local contractors. This national lead generation program has a proven track record of success. In the latest biannual survey of consumers who filled out the Find-A-Contractor form at the MRA website:

- 45 percent of the respondents have installed a roof (any type material) in the past two years
- More than 80 percent of those installed roofs were metal
- Of those who have not installed a roof, 52 percent plan to in the next year Nearly 90 percent of those who have not installed a roof yet are still considering metal.

Research done by MRA shows that MRA leads are engaged, interested consumers who are serious about making an informed roofing choice. In short, people who visit the MRA site are highly likely to install metal roofing. And MRA's outreach program is very effective at bringing them to the table.

## Quality Contractor Program

A major strategy for the MRA this year is to maintain and grow the number of MRA contractor members, as they are a crucial part of the market expansion plans. "For a small investment, metal roofing contractors can become members of MRA, be listed on our website, receive local sales leads, and take advantage of many tools to help grow their business," states Bill Hippard, president of MRA.

As an added bonus, MRA has developed a new program to assist consumers in their selection of a residential metal roofing contractor. The program, called the Investment Grade Roofing Quality Contractor Program, is intended to be an informational resource of metal roofing contractors that have agreed to meet certain standards and requirements relating to their services, installation materials and business practices. Metal roofing contractors can qualify for the program by certifying to MRA that they meet all program requirements and by providing supporting documentation such as proof of licensing and insurance.

## Continuing Education

In addition to supplying targeted leads, member contractors can also access MRA's Online University, which offers sessions led by industry leaders. Once logged into the education center, members can easily access a variety of video lessons, study guides and presentations on all aspects of the industry, including installation techniques, product demonstrations, sales and marketing.

There are three study tracks in the Online University: Metal Roofing Installer, Metal Roofing Business, and Marketing and Sales. Designed with busy contractors in mind, the MRA Online University can be accessed 24/7, and is a perfect tool for training new crew members, or as a refresher for seasoned installers. Each lesson includes a quiz to be sure that the participant understands the material presented.

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Tom Black is the executive director of the Metal Roofing Alliance. For more information, visit the professional section of the MRA website, [www.metalroofing.com](http://www.metalroofing.com), or call Alli Parsons, MRA's contractor liaison, at (410) 534-6900, or via email at [support@metalroofing.com](mailto:support@metalroofing.com).

## Sidebar

## Natural Metal Roofs Shine Again

During the past decade, natural metal roofs have enjoyed a renaissance in the residential roofing marketplace. Natural materials are defined as selfhealing materials that naturally develop a protective layer or patina as they age. Scratches and imperfections seem to vanish as the

patina develops. The materials for natural metal roofs are extracted from the earth as a raw material then manufactured into sheets and coils.

Paint for metal had not yet been developed during the early days of European architecture when places of worship were built with natural metal roofs. The use of natural metals has spanned centuries in famous buildings, such as the Cologne Cathedral in Germany, Notre Dame in Paris, Westminster Abbey in London and the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem.

Natural metals saw resurgence in Europe in the late 1970s. Architects began using natural metals again in residential projects for their aesthetic qualities. Improved installation techniques and new manufacturing capabilities added to the versatility natural metals could provide. Originally used primarily for standing and batten-seam roofs, natural metals now are used in corrugated, flush-seam, cassettes and flat-lock applications.

Technology developed by members of the Metal Roofing Alliance (MRA) helped bring these beautiful metals into the mainstream and allowed them to be applied in beautiful architectural home designs. Given the rise in demand and popularity, the MRA added a new Natural Metals section to our website to educate consumers about this distinctive category of products available for their home.

For example, MRA member Raleigh, N.C.-based Umicore Building Products USA Inc. offers products such as Natural VMZINC, which shows the lustrous, shiny finish that zinc achieves as it is milled which will later weather. Quartz-Zinc and Anthra-Zinc are pre-weathered to achieve stylish grey and black patinas, and maintain their distinctive appearance for decades. Pigmento is a dynamic new look that incorporates mineral pigments, creating beautifully organic red, green and blue shades.

Natural materials are ideal for urban districts or historic settings because the surface desired will blend seamlessly into the surroundings. There is little or no maintenance required during the life span of a natural metal roof. "A natural metal roof is a great choice for a home because of the value they add to the building envelope based on their cost effectiveness, long service life and sustainability. A natural metal roof will last 100 years, especially one made of zinc. In this marketplace, there are not very many products that can make that claim," states Dan Nicely, marketing director at Umicore.