Growth will continue as a key focus for the North American Steel Alliance (NASA) in 2020. In 2019, the co-op expanded through the addition of six new member-owners and a new flat roll supplier, SDI Heartland. “Our tonnage was also up in 2019. The momentum we see going into 2020 will help set the stage for our member-owners and the co-op,” explained Mike Wagner, President of NASA.

The NASA Management Team anticipates 2020 growth through several avenues. New member acquisition and member engagement is key. “Our member-owners help drive growth within the co-op by expanding their relationships and purchases from our preferred suppliers,” Wagner said, “This is part of the NASA first mentality.” Increasing the number of tons purchased within the co-op and meeting our planned goals all contribute to growth.

Another area for increased growth is through member-to-member business. “NASA member-owners should actively reach out to fellow members to purchase steel products rather than purchase from outside of the NASA community,” said Wagner. Buying from other NASA members helps build deeper relationships and enhances the supply chain within the co-op. NASA management is working on tools to help facilitate member-to-member business.

The team also remains focused on increasing the overall value of NASA membership, which includes hosting networking events, sharing best practices, and facilitating data-sharing. "We are continually looking for additional ways to add value to NASA membership."
Growth Summary
• Add qualified new member-owners (Management Team)
• Continue to evaluate additional metal and operational suppliers (Management Team)
• Increase tons with preferred NASA suppliers (Members)
• Increase member-to-member business (Members)

Registration is Open for the 2020 Annual Meeting

Attendance at the NASA Annual Meeting has been on the upswing for the past three years. “Each year we see new faces at the event and strive to bring in new and engaging guest speakers,” reported Mike Wagner, President of NASA. The 2019 Annual Meeting set the record for the most one-on-one supplier sessions. Booking for this year’s one-on-one sessions will begin at the end of March. NASA will send out details prior to opening the one-on-one scheduling.

Behind the scenes planning for the 2020 Annual Meeting is shaping up and the event promises to be another opportunity to network with fellow members and expand knowledge of key trends in the industry.

REGISTER TODAY!

Book Your Room for the Annual Meeting

The Ritz-Carlton Orlando, Grande Lakes

The rate is $299 per night. The cut-off date for the NASA room rate is Monday, March 30, 2020. Don't delay - it's possible for rooms at this rate to book up before then.

RESERVE YOUR ROOM ONLINE
or call 800-266-9432

Transition to Next Stage Processing

Now that we are kicking off a new decade, this is the perfect time to take a closer look at the service offerings of your business. Many NASA members are already expanding their
services into various forms of processing. Several NASA members shared their perspective with regard to processing services at the October Forecast Conference. Here are a few highlights from that breakout session:

**ON SALES IMPACT...**

“Over 200,000 sf of our operations is devoted to processing. 100% of the steel that leaves our shop is finished.”—Dave Brannon, Brannon Steel

“Processing is now 50% of our business.”—Mike O’Brien, O’Brien Steel Service

**ON GETTING STARTED...**

“We started doing some bar grate grinding, which led to some welding work. Then in 2004, a big customer asked us to do processing, by putting holes in their beams. Ever since then, we have been processing material for customers.”—Micky Tschirhart, Scion Steel

“We look at RFPs that come in and identify processing that we aren’t currently providing. Then we consider adding that capability.”—Dave Brannon

“Our sales people ask questions of the customer to better understand the processing needs before and after we deliver the material.”—Micky Tschirhart

**ON IMPACT TO CULTURE...**

“When we expanded into processing, we needed a whole new commitment and mindset from our employees. To go from Oxy-fuel tolerances to requirements of a few thousandths is a big change for employees. Its almost a bigger part of the change than adding the necessary equipment.”—Steve Heneveld, Harbor Steel

“We cross-train our operators.”—Dave Brannon

“We hold print-reading classes for our employees.”—Mike O’Brien

“We put a lot of pressure on our IT people to help address flow for processing.”—Micky Tschirhart

“We have grown our processing business through acquisition. And that requires a culture change for employees.”—Mike O’Brien

**ON COMPETING WITH CUSTOMERS...**

“There is disruption happening in every business sector today. Processing overlapping with fabrication is disruptive. Smaller customers are impacted. But our larger customers are asking for this value-add. We are able to make up, 10-fold, for the loss of the smaller customers.”—Micky Tschirhart
In 2019, NASA members were invited to attend a webinar regarding eGerdau, the electronic platform used by Gerdau customers. This is just one aspect of the beam and merchant supplier’s push into the digital world. “We see investments into the digital side of the business as a differentiator to support the acceleration of our customer-centric mindset across the organization,” reported Stan Baucum, Director of Sales for Gerdau. These digital investments will be used to enhance our ability to provide proactive service, leveraging artificial intelligence (AI), our rolling and production scheduling, and our forecasting.

As one of the earliest preferred suppliers at NASA, Gerdau produces long steel and special steel products from a network of mills across the United States and Canada. “These steel mills require a massive amount of capex to be reinvested into our operations. We are constantly making strategic investments to improve efficiency. Now our investments in digital will take us to a new level,” highlighted Baucum. The digital platforms will help Gerdau establish better informed rolling schedules which translates to improved delivery schedules for customers. “We have always offered strong and steady availability. Our plans to enhance our digital landscape will help us further reduce interruptions in production and improve planned inventory.”

NASA’s data analytics platform will also help inform Gerdau. “As we develop in the digital area, even data from outside our operations will help drive efficiencies. Line item data will provide helpful information in the future,” Baucum added. He also encouraged NASA members to review the eGerdau platform. “If they haven’t been there recently, it will look and perform very differently. We are constantly using customer feedback to continually refine and improve customer service and our platform.”

Save-The-Date for Upcoming NASA Webinars
Welcome New Supplier

On January 1, 2020 NASA welcomed EXLTUBE as a new tubing supplier. They offer structural tube, mechanical tube, and standard pipe products. Located in North Kansas City, Missouri, the company has the ability to ship product via truck load or build railcar loads.

“The addition of EXLTUBE to our metals program rounds out our roster of tubing and pipe suppliers and provides added value to NASA members,” said Deana Lecy, Director of Metals at NASA.

Board Roundtable featured in Metal Center News

During the annual NASA Forecast Conference in October, Metal Center News sat down with the NASA Board of Directors. The leaders discussed conditions in 2019, expectations for 2020, trade policy and other issues affecting the steel industry.

Meet Colleen McCurdy

Director of Marketing for NASA

NASA Network sat down with the newest member of NASA’s Management Team, Colleen McCurdy, Director of Marketing. Here she tells us more about herself and a vision for growth.

Q. What attracted you to the NASA position?
As a marketer, my passion is to help businesses grow, while also working to identify strategies and tactics to fuel that growth. NASA’s mission to facilitate growth for member-owners and suppliers aligns with my own values. My previous experience in professional associations is also a good fit. This role provides a good balance of utilizing the skills I’ve developed throughout my career, while also providing opportunity to build on those skills and increase my knowledge.

Q. What will your responsibilities be?

High-level responsibilities include brand awareness, member engagement and new member and supplier acquisition. I’ll be working on integrated marketing campaigns to drive awareness utilizing the NASA website, social media, email, PR and advertising. The first step is to further enhance the NASA brand through various tactics including messaging and brand positioning. I’ve also been working to formalize our member and supplier communications through new processes and digital marketing tools.

Q. What is your background and some of your previous positions?

I have over 18 years of marketing experience in B2C, B2B and association marketing. The majority of my career, I’ve worked in marketing roles for privately-owned businesses, including a loyalty marketing firm, large accounting firm and digital marketing agency. Over the past 8 years, I’ve worked for nonprofit membership associations, most recently as director of marketing for the Association for Supply Chain Management (formerly APICS). As lead marketer for these associations, I oversaw brand and product marketing including membership, certification programs, student programs, corporate membership, affinity programs, annual conferences and workshops.

Q. As a newcomer to the steel industry, what is the most surprising thing you have discovered about working in Steel?

I am amazed at the personal connections and networking that happens within the steel industry. In other industries I’ve worked in, it seems the human element to doing business becomes lost, which is unfortunate. In times of rapid digital growth, I believe the human element is a differentiator in the market. People want to do business with authentic brands that provide relevance and understand their needs.

As a newcomer to the steel industry, what is the most surprising thing you have discovered about working in Steel?