

STARTING AT GROUND LEVEL SETS FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS

Purchased by Brad Miller in 1992, Norsteel Building Systems is now owned by son Brandon and son-in-law Jason Eising

KELOWNA - Brandon Miller got his start in the family business at ground level digging ditches in the summer during high school. His father, **Brad Miller**, believed that the proper way of learning a business was to experience it, all of it.

"Dad started us off right at the bottom because he felt experiencing every aspect of the business, including every job, would give us the right mentality for eventually running it."

The 25-year-old business, **Norsteel Building Systems Ltd.**, has served the family well. Brad

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BRANDON MILLER
OWNER, NORSTEEL BUILDING SYSTEMS, LTD.



Jason Eising likes to say that erecting a steel building is like assembling a Lego set with clear step by step instructions

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Steel structures satisfy an industry that is looking for a durable and cost-effective product that is less expensive than concrete tilt-ups

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Office personnel includes, back left, Garrett Savard, Project Manager, Jason Eising, Owner/General Manager, far right, Ray Smith, Project Manager, front left, Brandon Miller, Owner/Estimator, May Chamberlain, Office Administrator

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Celebrating 25 Years



Nucor Building Systems congratulates Authorized Builder, Norsteel Building Systems, LTD., as they celebrate 25 years of excellence in metal building construction.



Norsteel has erected buildings for mills, aviation hangars, warehouses, machine shops, car washes, storage buildings, retail businesses, small buildings, and agricultural facilities

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bought the business in 1992 after seeing an ad in the Kelowna paper, and all these years later it is now owned by his son and son-in-law and employs 25-30 workers.

“Dad was pile driving in Vancouver, but the city was growing and he found it getting too busy for him. We visited Kelowna a lot for family vacations, and when he saw Norsteel up for sale, even though he didn’t know anything about steel buildings, he was a Jack-of-all-trades, figured he could do it and bought the company.”

Brandon joined the business after he graduated and spent a year in Australia. When he came back, he was still digging the odd ditch, but Brad also had him learning how to erect a steel building from the ground up, as well as what it takes to design and manage its construction.

“I definitely benefitted by learning every job, especially in how I view each project. I know how to design and draw

a structure and I’ve also built hundreds. I know what the guys need to erect a building more efficiently and what it takes to stay safe.”

But family connections go a little deeper at Norsteel than just father and son. Co-owner, **Jason Eising**, was already foreman at Norsteel when Miller started working for the company. He was also dating Brad’s daughter, who eventually married him!

In 2015, Miller and Eising bought Brad out and became partners in the company that has now designed and constructed over 530 steel buildings, mostly in BC, but also extending into Alberta and Saskatchewan.

“We’ve been friends for a long time and have a great relationship,” said Miller. “When we were younger we worked on jobs together and there was a real camaraderie. When we came to the table to negotiate the buy-out, that friendship was a real benefit because we knew what kind of work ethic each was bringing to the business.”

Eising adds that working at separate jobs within the company also helps as it puts each person where his strengths lie. Miller acts as the chief estimator and is responsible for most of the sales and in landing projects. Eising, who was operations manager for eight years before purchasing the company, continues in his role as a general manager.

Miller, Eising and a third partner also bought Brad out in a complementary company, **Miller**

Equipment Rentals Ltd. which supplies Norsteel and other companies with the necessary equipment used in construction.

“The businesses go hand in hand and dad still likes to pop in and see what is happening and what new projects are on the go.”

“We’re in a great business,” he said. “So many businesses in construction tend to slow down periodically in connection with the housing market. But when times are slow in one industry,

and there isn’t much demand for new builds, they can be booming in another with a large demand. We’re always busy because our buildings get erected across a variety of industries. We aren’t tied to one.”

He said that Norsteel has erected buildings for mills, aviation hangars, warehouses, machine shops, car washes, storage buildings, retail businesses, small buildings, agricultural

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Miller Equipment Rentals Ltd. supplies Norsteel with the manlifts used to keep workers safe

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facilities and more. He said that recently, there is a trend in steel buildings for wineries and commercial facilities. Another high demand area is for re-roofing existing buildings and retro fitting old buildings with new siding.

Norsteel provides the option of comprehensive services for erecting pre-engineered buildings offering building sales, erecting, foundations, turn-key complete buildings and general contracting.

"We pride ourselves on being a one-stop shop, providing as much or as little as the customer wants," Miller said.

"For customers who want to construct their own project, we drop ship the building package that meets all building codes and regulations and contains clear and concise instructions. We help our customers throughout the construction process. Even for drop ship customers, we let them know that we are only a phone call away."

"Industry is looking for a durable and cost-effective product and steel buildings today are less expensive than concrete tilt-ups," Eising emphasized.

Changes in the exterior and interior of the buildings are generating most of the interest, as what once was plain and unattractive or less energy



Norsteel has a strong sense of community within its workforce

CREDIT: CHARLENE WAINES WILTINK

efficient, with new products has been transformed into a cost effective and sought after building choice.

"The new products have been well accepted by businesses, especially with the new thermal insulated sandwich panel system that gets away from the traditional corrugated wall look."

Pre-engineered steel buildings are now attractive alternatives that can come in at up to 40 per cent less than the traditional block alternative. They can be erected quickly and with less waste. Shipped and delivered direct to the site, upon arriving they are ready to be assembled by Norsteel's qualified staff.

"Fabrication is done to meet



Norsteel holds regular training to ensure everyone is up-to-date with information on keeping safe on the job

CREDIT: CHARLENE WAINES WILTINK

or exceed the code and quality plans," explained Miller. "Design and installation are done in-house by our certified and professional tradespeople."

Versatility is also a key draw for these buildings. Modular construction can be designed to grow, with a business making additions or re-imagining space straightforward and easy.

Another perk of going steel is its low maintenance. Steel panels are strong and hardy, fire resistant, watertight, energy efficient and easy to clean.

Over the years that Miller has been involved with the business and steel buildings he's seen changes that have made for a better finished product.

"A better thermal value has definitely been an improvement, as well as the exterior look of the finished building. When it comes to safety, I remember when I first started we were installing off of a ladder. The work is very labour intensive and at high heights. Now we use the correct equipment suited to each individual job to ensure all our guys

stay safe and production time is faster with man lifts and other equipment we rent from Miller Equipment."

Over the years, Norsteel has worked on installations with built-in challenges that a steel building is uniquely qualified to solve.

"We're building a Snow Cat facility in the Monashees that gets from 25 to 30 feet of snow in a year and required a structural design that could handle that volume," said Eising. "We're also suitably equipped for the BC Hydro Run of the River, which has projects located in remote areas with no access roads. In many cases we had to barge the materials and equipment in."

But that's a steel structure's strength. As Eising explains, "it's like a Lego set that comes in a nice package with a clear set of step-by-step instructions. Easy to put together and impressive when complete."

Norsteel Building Systems Ltd. is at 1295 Stevens Road in Kelowna

www.norsteelbuildingsystems.com

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