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Positioning Your Galvanizing Shop for Growth in the AI Era

Digitize first. Then let AI do the heavy lifting.



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Get Ahead with Steelhead

WHY AI

AI is coming for your shop, and using it won't be optional

Four reasons to put AI to work now:

1

Better outcomes, fewer resources

Deliver better results for you and your customers with less cost.

2

Less reliance on tribal knowledge

Shop know-how lives in the system, not in a few people's heads.

3

Ready for the next generation

Give incoming workers the tools they expect to use.

4

Faster answers

Spot opportunities and find solutions quickly.

The shops that build the right foundation now pull ahead. The ones who wait feel it in their margins and their turnaround.

Galvanizing is built for this

One expensive asset. A clear unit of throughput. That makes your operation easier to digitize and easier to optimize than almost any shop out there.

1

The kettle is the constraint

Your whole business runs through one asset. When the constraint is that clear, every extra dip per day is revenue with zero added capex.

2

Throughput is measurable

Pounds and dips per day are a clean, honest metric. Digitize them and you can finally see where the hours and the money actually go.

3

Maintenance is mission-critical

A kettle down is revenue gone. Tie maintenance to inventory and data and you protect the one thing that makes you money.

AI-Powered Operations Assistants

Industrial AI Assistants for ERPs that run on your live shop data

It answers questions, takes over data entry, and will soon act on its own, with your approval.

01

Efficiency

Hand it the busywork. Upload POs, packing slips, BOMs, or vendor quotes and it enters the data for your review.

LIVE TODAY

02

Intelligence

Ask about margins, rework, or customer trends and get answers from live data, or have insights sent to your inbox.

LIVE AND EXPANDING

03

Automation

Bot managers watch the shop around the clock, then quote, schedule, and purchase. You approve before anything goes out.

COMING SOON

Source: Steelhead, Sonar AI product page (info.gosteelhead.com/sonar-ai), October 2026

AVAILABLE NOW

Seven features are live in job shop ERPs today

Two jobs: answer questions from your shop data, and take data entry off your team's plate.

GET ANSWERS

LIVE

Analytics

Ask questions in plain English, get answers from live data

Custom Report Builder

Describe the report you want and Sonar builds it

Pings

Scheduled insights land in your inbox, no one has to pull them

Support

Step-by-step help on anything in your ERP, no ticket to file

SKIP THE DATA ENTRY

LIVE

AI Order Entry

Upload POs and the AI assistant enters the orders for you to review

AI Receiving

Upload receiving paperwork and AI Assistant logs what arrived

AI Template Builder

Tell it what to change on a quote, invoice, or cert PDF

IN BETA

Three emerging features supporting ERPs

RUNNING IN CUSTOMER SHOPS NOW

AI Vendor Quotes

BETA

Enters quotes from several vendors and compares price and lead time side by side

AI BOM Import

BETA

Builds an uploaded BOM in your ERP in minutes instead of hours

AI RFQ

BETA

Fills out the RFQ when a quote request arrives, so no request gets lost

BETA STARTS Q4 2026

AI Lead Times

Q4 2026

Estimates a lead time for every order from WIP, capacity, and past runs

AI Quoting

Q4 2026

Builds and prices the quote, ready for you to review and send

Mobile App

Q4 2026

Chat with AI Assistant from your phone to check on jobs and get answers

Four more AI features for the future

AI assistant moves from data entry into scheduling, AP, workflow building, and order checks.

Q1 2027

AI Scheduling
Re-optimizes the schedule when new orders, rework, or expedites land

Q1 2027

AI Bills
Enters vendor invoices as bills, so AP takes less keying and has fewer errors

Q1 2027

AI Page Builder
Builds workflow automations and page layouts from a description, no code

Q1 2027

AI Contract Review
Checks every order against the customer’s PO and flags mismatched parts, quantities, pricing, or specs

NEXT: BOTs
AI managers for quoting, scheduling, outsourcing, purchasing, and accounts that watch the shop around the clock and do the work.

●

 Something happens

●

 Sonar does the work

●

 You approve

LIVE POLL

Which best describes your shop's AI use today?

Pick one. Responses are anonymous and results show up live.



Not using AI yet

No one in the shop uses AI tools today.



Chat tools

We use something like ChatGPT or Claude for emails, quotes, and summaries.



AI Point Solutions

AI is built into pieces of software, like CRMs. Some tasks automated.



Enterprise AI

AI is connected across quoting, production, and invoicing.

THE ONE THING MOST AI TALKS SKIP

You can't layer intelligence over chaos.

AI is only as good as the data underneath it. Before AI delivers a dollar of value, your operation has to be digitized. Every job, every part, every process step. Visible, tracked, and connected in real time across the whole floor. But it must be easy for production. And you must have accurate data and control over your agents.

No foundation, massive hallucinations, no payoff.

KEY POINT TODAY

To get the most from AI, go fully digital and keep AI in one controlled system

1

Become fully digital

Eliminate paper in the office and on the floor.

See the status of any job at any time, with a full history of its path through the plant.

2

Keep AI concentrated and controlled

Run AI in one permission-controlled system.

Limit APIs and connections to outside platforms so AI stays within bounds.

WHY IT MATTERS

Fully digital → **Reliable data** → **AI takes on more tasks**

LLM output varies from run to run, so control cuts down bad outcomes.

DEFINE THE TERM

What “digitized” actually means on a galv floor

TODAY, ON PAPER

- Order lives on a clipboard until someone keys it in
- “Where are my parts?” answered by walking the yard
- Zinc and consumables tracked in a spreadsheet
- Turnaround is a guess. Job costing is a mystery
- The two people who know everything are the system

DIGITIZED

- ✓ Every load and dip is in the system the moment it lands
- ✓ Part status and location is on a screen, not a walk to the kettle
- ✓ Pounds, dips per day, and inventory update live
- ✓ Dock-to-dock time and job cost are numbers, not hunches
- ✓ The process holds the knowledge, so anyone can run it

THE PAYOFF

Digitize the floor, and two things happen

01

The busywork gets automated

Data entry, order processing, receiving, job tracking. The hours your team burns on paper give way to the work that actually moves the business.

02

You get real answers

Margin by customer. Throughput by line. On-time trends. Actual job cost vs. your quote. Questions that used to be a spreadsheet project become instant.

AI needs one connected system, not ten bolt-ons

If quoting, receiving, production, and accounting live in separate systems and spreadsheets, AI has nothing coherent to reason over. The shops pulling ahead run the whole floor on one system of record, then layer AI on top.

Quote

Receive

Produce

Invoice

AI on top

One system of record

Galvanizers are already doing this

A Texas galvanizer

Came off a legacy ERP and cut invoicing time in half in the first weeks. The office lead put the hours back into pushing production.

A Gulf Coast shop

Bought in to grow top line by about 35% without adding a single admin head. The system, not more people, carries the growth.

An overseas galv group

Was running ~25 dips a day against a target of 40 with no visibility into why. Digitizing to find the roughly 30% of capacity hiding in the gaps.

AUTOMATE THE BUSYWORK EXAMPLE

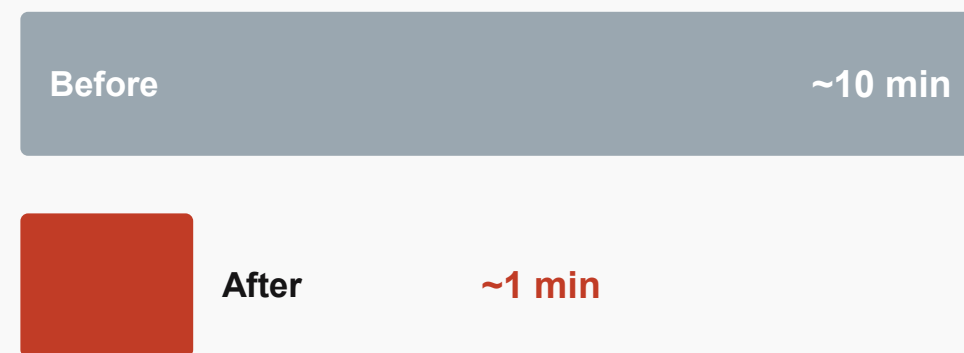
This is where AI earns its keep

Example: AI reads the incoming PO and builds the job. Receiving, order entry, and spec matching that used to eat the morning. It only works because the shop's part numbers and specs already live in the system.

~~10 min~~ → **1 min**

Order entry, per order, at one finishing shop after turning on AI. About 40 orders a day.

TIME PER ORDER



“Before AI, by the time I finished receiving, the parts were already processed. Now I go from 5–15 minutes an order down to one.”

— Office lead, plant with AI order Entry

AI turns an RFQ into a quote ready to review in minutes

HOW IT WORKS

- 1 A customer sends an RFQ or an email.
- 2 AI reads the request and builds the quote.
- 3 You review the quote and send it.

OUTCOMES

2 hrs → 2 min

Quote turnaround: digital vs. with AI

- **Increase Revenue**
- **Reduce admin cost**

Load a stack of orders and they're entered in minutes

HOW IT WORKS

1

Upload a whole stack of orders at once.

2

AI enters the data, adds new parts, check part library and specs, and flags problems or missing information for correction.

3

Orders land on the digital schedule, ready to batch, in minutes.

OUTCOMES

- **Increased on-time delivery**
- **Process more pounds per day**
- **Lower admin cost**
- **80% reduction in admin time**

Check orders in the yard, with no tags or paperwork

HOW IT WORKS

- 1 The receiver checks the order in the yard. Enters count, weight, length, issues, etc.
- 2 Good orders are routed and scheduled. Problem orders go on a digital quality hold, with no tags or cones.
- 3 Quality notifies the customer from the yard. AI reads the reply and updates the routing for you to approve.

OUTCOMES

- **Improved on-time delivery and customer service**
- **Fewer mistakes**
- **Faster scheduling and batching**

Dashboards can show dips, pounds, and zinc in real time to motivate production.

WHAT YOU CAN SHOW

1

Dips, pounds, and revenue, in real time.

2

Rework and zinc efficiency, as they happen.

3

Compare and use the numbers to motivate or reward the crew.
View plants production and financial data side by side.

OUTCOMES

- **Higher margins**
- **Better labor retention**
- **A workplace the next generation wants**

Ask your phone for any report, built from live data

HOW IT WORKS

- 1 Financials tie to real-time production, inventory, maintenance, quality, payroll, and timesheets.
- 2 Ask the app for the report you want, in plain English.
- 3 AI builds the report from live data, with no exporting or spreadsheets.

OUTCOMES

- **Faster decisions**
- **No one pulling reports by hand**
- **One version of the numbers**

Pings put your key insights in your inbox when needed.

EXAMPLE PINGS

1

Stalled parts that haven't moved.

2

Dips or pounds per day slipping below target.

3

Scheduled maintenance that was missed.

OUTCOMES

- **Problems caught early**
- **No one has to pull the numbers**
- **Managers act on facts, not hunches**

THE BOTTOM LINE

The foundation is the strategy

AI is not a shortcut around a digitized shop. It's the reward for building one. The galvanizers who lay that foundation now will widen the gap. The ones who wait will feel it in their margins.



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