

Manufacturers Digest

What's in this Publication

- ◆ Chairman's Message
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- ◆ Supply Chain Transformation
- ◆ Healthier Break Rooms
- ◆ Tariff Talk

Q2 2025

-Candice Pineau, QGM Grinding:

Candice Pineau – Chair of the Board



BNMA Launches Monthly Update Video Series and Highlights a Strong Second Quarter

The Buffalo Niagara Manufacturing Alliance (BNMA) is excited to roll out our new **Monthly Update Video Series**, designed to keep our members informed, engaged, and connected. This initiative is all about helping you—our valued members—stay current with the latest advocacy efforts, workforce development initiatives, and business opportunities. Each month, we'll share highlights of what BNMA has been working on and offer insights into how you can plug into ongoing and upcoming programs that support your company's growth.

This past quarter has been full of momentum and meaningful engagement. One of the standout events was our **member tour at Welded Tube**, where attendees had the opportunity to witness first-hand the cutting-edge technology and innovation driving modern manufacturing. The feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, with many citing the tour as one of the most eye-opening and inspiring we've hosted.

In May, we celebrated a milestone for the region's manufacturing community: **ten BNMA member companies were honored at the Buffalo Business First Manufacturing Awards**. Seeing our members recognized on stage for their excellence and leadership in manufacturing was a proud moment for the entire BNMA network. These awards are a testament to the hard work and dedication of our member companies and their employees.

We closed out the quarter with our always-popular **annual golf outing**, which saw a full roster of participants. While the event was well-attended, unfortunately, Mother Nature didn't cooperate. Torrential rain cut the day short for many, but the camaraderie and connections still made it a memorable occasion.

Looking ahead, we're excited to launch a **new member recruitment event** later this month. If you work with suppliers or partners who aren't yet BNMA members but should be, we encourage you to bring them along. It's a great opportunity to introduce them to the BNMA community in a relaxed setting and show them the value of joining our network.

Stay tuned for our next monthly update video—and thank you for being part of the BNMA. Together, we're building a stronger manufacturing future for Western New York.

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A BIG Round of applause for our 2025 Major Sponsors for their ongoing support of the BNMA. We do a lot of things behind the scenes in terms of advocacy, ongoing workforce development. Their support allows us to focus on what we do best, which is representing manufacturers in Western New York.



A Message from your Executive Director—Peter Ahrens



Q2 Highlights: Expanding Opportunity, Celebrating Success, and Investing in the Future

The second quarter of 2025 was packed with activity as the BNMA continued to drive opportunity, foster partnerships, and support the next generation of manufacturing leaders.

We kicked off the quarter with initial educational sessions hosted by BlueForge Alliance (BFA) and the Maritime Industrial Base (MIB). These sessions laid out the pressing need to grow the supplier base in support of the U.S. Navy's ambitious nuclear submarine build schedule. Attendance from both BNMA members and non-members was strong, showing the region's interest in stepping up to meet this critical national need. Ben Rand and I are now working to organize a series of follow-up sessions offering a deeper dive into the tactics and pathways available for those who want to pursue opportunities within the submarine supply chain. More details on those sessions will be coming soon.

In early June, we turned our attention to the growing semiconductor industry. BNMA and several member companies already active in this space gathered to learn more about the sector's future in New York State. As momentum builds, we're hosting a two-day informational and networking event on July 15–16, bringing together Tier 1–3 suppliers. If you're looking to break into this industry or deepen your engagement, make the time to participate—these sessions are designed to provide actionable insights and meaningful introductions.

Also this month, I had the pleasure of visiting Everfab to help them celebrate an incredible 45 years in business. With the passing of founder Al Everett nearly three years ago, Susan Everett has taken the reins and continued building on his legacy. Congratulations to the Everfab team on this milestone—here's to the next 45 years of excellence.

On the workforce front, Dream It Do It (DIDI) is continuing to thrive following its successful relaunch last August. For the 2024–2025 school year, DIDI exceeded its enrollment goal of 1,052 new students, already signing up over 1,100 as of this writing. A huge congratulations to Todd Trantum (CEO), Cindy Aronson (Director – Southern Tier), Stephanie Morris (Director – Erie County), and Allison Sharpe (Director – Niagara County) for their leadership and success.

This summer marks an exciting milestone as Erie and Niagara Counties will host their first “Manufacturing Mayhem” camps, following the strong example set in the Southern Tier. I had the chance to visit the Southern Tier camp last year and left deeply impressed. I can't wait to hear from students in Erie and Niagara as they engage in a week packed with hands-on STEM learning.

Stay tuned for more updates via the Manufacturers Minute and direct communications. As always, thank you for being a part of the BNMA community.

Best regards,

Peter



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- Mortgage Tax Exemption: .75% savings of mortgage recording tax amount

Light Manufacturing Land Development

Renaissance Commerce Park, a thriving advanced manufacturing campus located in Lackawanna where the former Bethlehem Steel plant once stood, has 90 acres available for light-medium industrial, warehouse/distribution development.

ecidany.com



Tariffs are Subject to Sale Tax... Right?

By William DiLorenzo – Published on Monday, June 13, 2025

Tariffs. Love 'em or hate 'em, you gotta pay 'em. That's the policy of the current federal administration—dominating headlines since inauguration day. Regardless of how they've been received, or how many times their imposition date gets pushed back, tariffs seem here to stay.

Most of the media discussion around these tariffs is politicized, focusing on price increases at the consumer level or their impact on foreign negotiations. No doubt these are real consequences of the policy—but the effects ripple throughout the manufacturing pipeline as well.

But what if there were a way to reduce those consequences, even slightly?

Most companies assume they have to pay—and charge—sales tax on the cost of a tariff. And they're right to think so! After all, sales tax is typically charged on most excise taxes or fees associated with a purchase. Plus, in most cases, the cost of a tariff isn't even separately stated. So why wouldn't it be taxable too?

It all comes down to the definition of a “receipt.” NYS Reg. Sec. 526.5, *Receipt* (Tax Law Secs. 1101(b)(3), 1111(h)), lays out that definition—covering its structure, what items must be included, and which lines are subject to tax. The regulation is thorough, but it has one glaring blind spot: tariffs. Nowhere in the definition does New York State address tariffs at all. Evidently, since most importers simply roll tariff costs into the price of their goods, the issue hasn't warranted attention.

So, are tariffs subject to tax or not?

Considering how most companies structure their receipts—probably. As mentioned, importers usually just raise their prices after paying a tariff. And once those two costs are merged, New York considers the whole amount taxable.

However, if even one customer of a major importer could convince them to separately state the tariff charge—and then request a refund from NYS for the sales tax charged on that amount—it could blow the door wide open. Suddenly, all sales tax on tariffs might be up for exemption.



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Congratulations to the 2025 BNMA Golf Outing Winners

- Women's Hole #1 Longest Drive – Lia Miller
- Women's Closest to the Pin #13 – Laura Rizzuto
- Men's Longest Drive Hole #9 – Max Winterburn
- Men's Longest Drive Hole #14 – Bryce Herrin
- Men's Closest to the Pin Hole #7 – Jay Conklin with a hole-in-one!



Top Teams:

- 1st Place:** Syracuse Supply – 11 under par
- 2nd Place:** RJ Watson – 8 under par
- 3rd Place:** Jamestown Container – 7 under par



Trump's tariffs are like upturning a table of puzzle pieces and reassembling them in a new way, but with the knowledge that you will end up with 5 percent more pieces because of the hoped-for reduction or elimination of the U.S. trade deficit. But we have no idea what these new puzzle pieces will be. If we gain 20 percent more low-tech commodity output and lose 15 percent of our high-tech, advanced output, that's just Ricardian comparative advantage. America might in fact be destined to be the soybean wonder of the world. For Trump, it's all about reducing the trade deficit. It's not about restructuring the U.S. economy around critical industries.

This gets to the core challenge of the Trumponomics. If Bidenomics was all about green equity,

Trumponomics is all about free-market protectionism. The former model focused on clean energy production and economic distribution. The latter focuses on radically shrinking the size of government, while eliminating the trade deficit with tariffs. The economy these policies produce will be, by definition, suboptimal.

Neither Bidenomics nor Trumponomics will cut it in a world in which America is fighting for its very

existence against China's increasingly advanced economy. The model we need instead is [national developmentalism](#), which, among other things, rejects and replaces the neoliberal doctrine that values all industries equally with a new doctrine that prioritizes some industries as critical.

It's beyond the scope of this piece to lay out a national developmentalist approach to tariffs, but suffice to say it would be much more targeted toward key bad actors in the global economy (as opposed to penalizing allies like the United Kingdom), and it would be concerned with certain components of advanced-industry production.

But until we have a Congress and administration that more widely and deeply rejects both free-market

fundamentalism and green equity in favor of national developmentalism, tariff policy will be in the service of free markets, not on preventing the catastrophic eventuality of losing our strategic industries to China.



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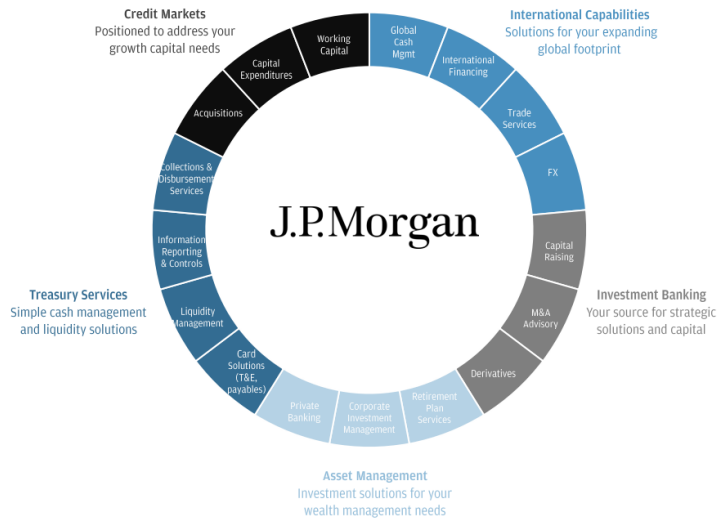
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Squaring the Trump Circle: Free Markets and Tariffs [Robert D. Atkinson](#)

Trump sees tariffs as an across-the-board global price reset, wherein the market, not the government, selects the firms that succeed behind America's tariff wall.

How does one account for the seeming contradiction that the Trump administration is the most free-market, small-government administration since the Coolidge administration, yet tariffs are the core of its economic policy? How can key Trump economic advisors, like Kevin Hassett, a traditional Republican free-market advocate, be such strong tariff advocates?

Traditionally, free marketeers have advocated for market forces to determine the terms of trade both between national economies (e.g., totally free trade with all nations) and within economies (e.g., limited regulations, no government programs to help industry, and a tax code that is neutral between industries and activities). Both are uniquely bizarre concepts, especially when taken to the extreme, as so many on the right are prone to do.

In his own way, President Trump embraces this framework. Certainly, for trade within the United States, Trump wants to slash regulations, have a tax code that raises less money and is neutral between activities and industries, and get rid of "industrial policies."

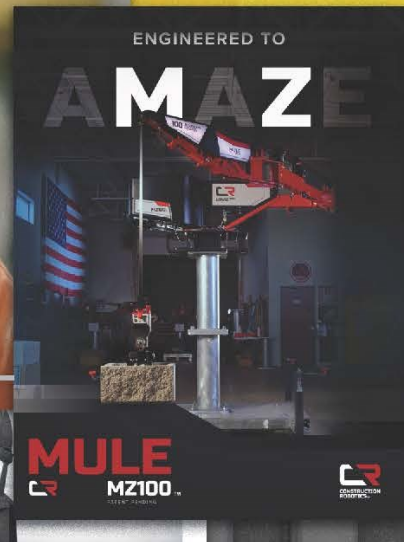
For trade between countries, Trump rightly sees that market forces are not the dominant force: Other nations' mercantilist protectionism is a major factor, too. So, Trump sees tariffs as an across-the-board global price reset, wherein the market, not the government, selects the firms that succeed behind America's tariff wall. Since other countries are cheating, either implicitly or explicitly, the market-neutral way to respond is with a market price signal: a tariff.

And if the winners turn out to be pork producers, steel mills, and furniture producers, fine. The firms and industries that succeed behind the tariff wall will be the ones that market forces enabled. And any exemptions to the tariffs, such as those given to iPhones and related imports from China, are not strategic responses, but rather political ones: The White House knew consumers would hate paying double the price for their iPhones.

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This framework also explains why Trump has attacked existing policies and programs directed toward advanced industries, including the CHIPS Act, science funding, NIST's Manufacturing Extension Partnership program, the Inflation Reduction Act's tax incentives for clean energy production, and more. Unlike neutral tariffs, these pick winners.

The problem, of course, is that there is a difference between potato chips and computer chips. Some U.S. industries and firms are critical to national defense and techno-economic power—and blanket tariffs are likely to hurt them. If a firm in an industry driven by advanced technology produces in America and sells a lot globally, but relies on imports for a significant part of its supply chain, it will likely lose global market share as tariffs drive up its production cost. Similarly, if a firm in an advanced industry sells most of its output in global markets, but other nations engage in tit-for-tat tariffs, it will end up with less global market share. And U.S. firms that operate globally might just decide to move production outside of America to avoid the tariffs.



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Client Snapshot:

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The Challenge:

Like many growing manufacturers, Multisorb faced inefficiencies across its supply chain—in planning, procurement, transportation, and warehousing. They needed a strategic partner to provide practical solutions and drive measurable improvements.

The Engagement:

Multisorb brought in John Hogg of Straight Forward Consulting as their “outsourced” Chief Logistics Officer. His mission: evaluate the supply chain organization, systems, and processes, and lead a transformation.

The Results:

- Inventory reduced from \$20 million to \$9 million
- Transportation costs cut by over \$400,000 in annual savings (LTL and Ocean)
- Customer order backlog cut in half
- New supply chain leadership installed to maintain momentum
- Twenty middle managers trained in end-to-end supply chain principles

From the CEO:

“John Hogg stands out from other supply chain consultants because he is a hands-on leader and a practical practitioner. His guidance was tried and true. Thanks to his experience and engaging style, we achieved a quick and significant ROI. When we think of supply chain consulting, we think of John and Straight Forward Consulting.”

— Eric Armenat, President & CEO, Multisorb Technologies



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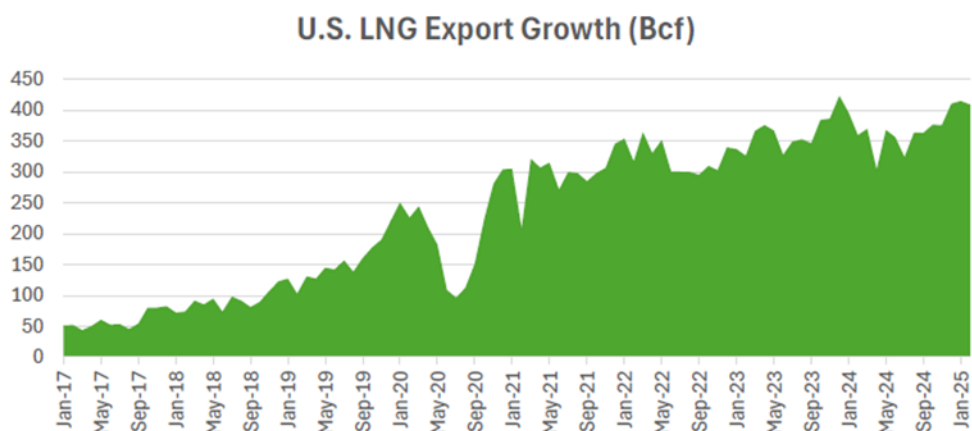
Winter Energy Recap — Will Summer Offer Relief?

By EnergyMark

If your energy bills felt unusually steep this past winter, you're not alone—and you're not imagining things. Western New York experienced a 21% increase in Heating Degree Days compared to the prior year, signaling a significantly colder season. That cold snap drove natural gas and electricity prices sharply upward, reminding us how closely our energy costs are tied to weather and global markets.

Natural gas futures for January and February settled over \$3.50/MMBtu—a 34% and 42% jump from the previous year. In some parts of the country, penalties for usage above contracted levels exceeded \$20/MMBtu due to pipeline constraints. And because natural gas fuels much of our electricity generation, power prices followed. Here in NYISO Zone A (Western NY), average winter prices soared 148% to over \$72/MWh.

These price shocks occurred despite record-setting natural gas production levels in Q1 2025. U.S. output has surged to meet growing global demand, especially from Europe, which remains heavily reliant on LNG imports. However, even this increased supply couldn't offset the intense cold, skyrocketing heating demand, and rapidly rising exports.



On the electricity side, demand continues to climb as the economy becomes increasingly electrified and adding new large loads to support data centers. This growing demand places additional strain on an already-stretched grid, requiring more generation and transmission investment especially as summer heat looms.

While natural gas prices have begun to stabilize with the arrival of milder weather and early injections into storage from continued heightened production, electricity futures remain elevated. Forward pricing into 2026 and 2027 continues to carry a premium, reflecting both infrastructure challenges and projected demand growth.

With such unpredictability, the question of whether or not to hedge your energy costs becomes more relevant than ever. At EnergyMark, we see hedging not as a way to beat the market, but as a way to build budget certainty and avoid price shocks like the ones we just experienced. If you're unsure of your risk tolerance, let's talk. Now's a good time to think strategically about the seasons ahead.

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As the weather improves, employees are more motivated to focus on wellness and healthier habits. What can we do to support their journey at work? Well, by providing them with a break room full of nutritious options. It will boost employee morale and keep staff fresh and energized. That's a win for productivity too.

Let's explore ways to deliver healthier products and services in your break room. Our healthy automated retail machines and other break room services make it hassle-free, so all you need to do is enjoy the benefits.

Nutritious Foods for Energized Workdays

Fresh food is a game-changer for employee energy. Offering items like yogurt, salads, wraps, and fruit cups keeps your team fueled and focused. How can you do it? Try one of our micro markets. It's a custom, onsite refreshment solution full of healthier choices like these. Your team will love not just healthy options, but top-selling snacks, lunches, and cold drink variety within steps of their work station.

Healthy food choices aren't just about nutrition. They also promote better work performance by keeping everyone sharp and feeling good throughout the day.

Healthier, Smart Snack Choices

We all love to snack during the day, but snacks don't have to derail health goals. Stock your automated retail machines and coolers with better-for-you options. High-protein snacks like beef jerky, trail mix, and protein bars keep hunger at bay. Oatmeal cups are another excellent choice, offering healthy carbs for sustained energy. They are great for employees who skipped breakfast, too.

By offering these snacks, you give your team the tools they need to stay full and focused while achieving their wellness goals.

Healthy Drinks for Wellness

Pairing snacks with healthy drinks is essential. There needs to be beverages that hydrate and support overall wellness. Protein drinks and sugar-free sports drinks in the break room offer a flavorful boost without added sugar. Sparkling water, iced tea, and flavored water are also excellent options. Consider a filtered water option for delicious cold and hot water on-demand, too. It's sustainable and encourages hydration.

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Understanding Re-Shoring: A Real Example from WNY

There's a great deal of discussion these days about "bringing manufacturing back to America," but apparently very little understanding of what such an effort entails. Bringing production back from offshore manufacturers (aka, "Re-Shoring") is a great goal, but it typically requires a lot of work and preparation. So, as a public service, here's an actual re-shoring example of what it took for one WNY company to bring their production back from China.

The Situation

Our client had engaged a Chinese manufacturer to make beds, but subsequently decided they wanted their products made in America for a variety of reasons, including long lead times for trans-pacific shipping, increasing freight costs and quality concerns (but it could easily have included tariffs/trade wars). Our client quickly ran into several challenges that might be considered typical for re-shoring.

Challenge #1, our client no longer had up-to-date drawings or specifications for their beds. Over time the product had evolved and changed as it was produced in China. These improvements and changes had resulted in new drawings and specifications which were created by the Chinese supplier, written in Chinese and held there. It's hard to build a product if you don't have drawings and specifications. So, we helped our client to reverse engineer their own product, creating accurate, up-to-date drawings and specifications in English that would be necessary to make their product in WNY.

Challenge #2, our client did not have U.S. suppliers for their materials and components, since the Chinese plant had bought their materials and components from their network of suppliers in China. First, there was a "make or buy" decision: what components should our client produce themselves and what would they buy. Next, for components our client would buy, they needed to identify American manufacturers (ideally nearby in WNY) who could produce those parts and components. We put together bid packages for those items and drew on our knowledge of the manufacturing landscape in WNY to identify possible suppliers for each item that our client needed. But we were not done yet.

Challenge #3, our client was relatively unknown in WNY manufacturing circles since they'd been producing their product in China. So potential suppliers were skeptical about responding to a bid package from our client: Was this just a "check price" that our client would leverage to beat down their existing suppliers? Were the indicated volumes, which would impact pricing, accurate? How quickly would these volumes be reached? etc. We used our credibility to explain our client's situation to these potential suppliers and convinced many of them to participate by submitting bids.

There are many other considerations in re-shoring that may apply beyond those above: How big a facility will you need? What type of workforce will be required? Will you need additional or new equipment? What is the timing/sequencing of the switch from offshored to re-shored production? Don't forget communications—to your supplier, to your team, to your customers and/or to others.

The Outcome: In the end, we were able to help our client address all these issues, identify and contract with local suppliers and successfully re-shore their bed manufacturing from China with minimal disruption. With control of their manufacturing and supply chain, shorter lead times and improved quality, our client was able to grow their business.

The Takeaways: Re-shoring presents significant planning and logistical challenges. Small manufacturers play a critical role for re-shoring companies, both large and small, that must create a new, domestic supply chain for themselves. Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) centers, like Insyte Consulting, understand manufacturing and can be a critical partner in re-shoring. The MEP network covers all 50 states and Puerto Rico with in-depth knowledge of their regional manufacturing landscape and nationwide programs like "Supplier Scouting" that can identify potential suppliers anywhere in America.

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