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YOUR Trade Magazine... published by the National Tooling and Machining Association



## **SUCCESSION PLANNING**

**PREPARING FOR LONGEVITY**

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Each issue of The Record features our members. We want to hear from you. Send us stories of successes, innovations or experiences.

The submission deadline is the 5th of the month prior to publication.

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# FROM ROGER

*a message from the president*

We start this year's focus on Succession Planning... Are You Prepared? Regardless of when you discuss succession, the subject is always pertinent. The most important part of the discussion is, "Are you prepared?" Succession comes in several different forms, each different in its own right. I personally have experienced multiple types of succession scenarios.

The form of succession that is least anticipated is the unplanned succession caused by an untimely death or an immediate exit from the company. This type of situation can be easier if you are prepared, or it can be the hardest transition if you are ill-prepared. When I first started in the industry in our family business, I knew that if something unexpected ever happened to my father, I would be expected to take charge. The reality was, I knew I did not know nearly enough to take over. So, unexpected succession planning was a regular and ongoing conversation. As I gained more experience, there would be times that I was not sure what direction my dad was going on an issue or company decision. At those times I would just tell him we needed to have our "morbid" conversation because I was unsure

what direction he was thinking. That communication worked and luckily, we never had to implement; however, we were prepared and never worried about the possibility of an unplanned succession situation. Looking back, I learned a lot about running the business in those conversations. My second unplanned succession occurred when I was part of a group with multiple locations. The manager at a key location passed away unexpectedly over the Thanksgiving weekend. When we all left on Wednesday, we expected to see each other back on Monday. That did not happen. We were not prepared by name as to whom would take over in the event of such a situation, but we were prepared as a group to fill the position internally and rather seamlessly. Obviously, we could not take away the heartache of the loss of our location leader and more importantly our dear friend, but as a company we were prepared for the unexpected.

A second form of succession is the internal company succession. In this type of succession you plan, you work your plan and you eventually execute. I have had the privilege to consult with multiple companies who wanted to execute generational family succession plans of

leadership and ownership. Of those with whom I have worked, they succeeded for three reasons... DESIRE, PLANNING, AND EXECUTION. Just to be clear, the process from the beginning to end took between two and three years. As stated, first it takes desire from both parties of the family or individuals to want to make a transition of leadership/ownership happen and happen successfully. Like-mindedness of the end goal is essential to a successful succession plan. Once everyone is on the same page with the financial mechanics, the real work begins — planning for such a transition. Planning involves the company at large, customers, employees, subcontractors, bankers, finances, and knowledge transfer. All are critical to the business before and after the transition of succession. It can and does work, it just takes the required time and effort to make it happen. Finally comes execution. In my opinion, this means communication with all persons involved and/or affected by the planned succession/transition. Unfortunately, there are many examples in the marketplace of complete failures of both planned and unplanned successions. I contend that the people involved in those succession failures really wanted it to happen, wished

it to happen, and hoped it would happen, but did not put in the time, effort and execution to assure it happened. The best of intentions always loses when there isn't a workable plan.

A third form of succession is the external company succession which typically involves an external buyout of current ownership paving the way for the owner to exit the company. In both unplanned and internal successions, the DNA of the company remains intact because the players of both parties are already involved and engaged in the company. However, when selling to an outside, non-engaged party, the landscape does change in the succession journey. Now, both parties involved have individual interests. An owner's goal is to maximize the sale price, while the buyer wants to minimize the sale price. The bottom line:

both parties are working to agree on the value of the business. This crossroads is not necessarily contentious, just the reality of competing desires. Often, the current owner's desire is to protect their employees and many times, their customer base, while the potential buyer's desire could be growth, change of technology, change of customer bases or other new goals. Now you have two competing DNA's potentially clashing for the future direction of the company.

Any unplanned, internal or external succession results in CHANGE. I contend that CHANGE is good and necessary for progress. For any CHANGE to be successful, COMMUNICATION is the key. PREPARATION is paramount for the success of any succession plan. Make succession part of your annual strategic

planning discussions, whether you are planning for succession/transition or not. Early and regular communication and planning means when the time comes, you'll be prepared. NTMA and NTMA partners are here to support you when that times comes.

Until then, let's Together Advance Manufacturing's Future. Happy New Year to ALL.

Roger Atkins, President, NTMA

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# NEW YEAR, NEW LOOK.

For The Record, you may notice some changes to your membership magazine. For months, the NTMA team has been talking to members, trying out new concepts and looking for ways to make this magazine, YOUR magazine, more interesting, more engaging and more valuable to you, the reader.

The NTMA membership is a cross-section of the best of the best in precision manufacturing. We want to spotlight your work, share resources and provide every opportunity to help you build upon your successes.

You can expect to find the usual monthly themed features that you've come to appreciate, but you'll also find some new, recurring columns that highlight the strengths and uniqueness of our members.

These pages are intended to share best practices, encourage and inspire. We hope you'll be part of the next chapter. If your company would like to be featured in an upcoming issue, please email me at [editor@ntma.org](mailto:editor@ntma.org). We also welcome your feedback and suggestions.

We're manufacturing the future, and we have a story to tell.

Help us write a good one.

*Molly*

Molly West, Managing Editor, The Record

*Editor's Note*



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# DO WE NEED SUCCESSION PLANNING?

Mike Watkins MBA / JD, Principal, EBITDA Growth Systems

Succession planning is the process of identifying the critical positions within your organization and developing action plans for individuals to assume those positions. For the small to medium-sized (SMB) company, the nature of succession planning evolves over time.

As depicted in the graphic below, succession planning for the SMB precision manufacturer with revenues less than or equal to \$2M centers on

expanding the management team to include 1-2 resources beyond just the owner. For the \$2M or below enterprise, the owner is totally responsible and accountable for every business function — sales and marketing, accounting, and operations (manufacturing parts). There may be a bookkeeping resource to handle accounts payable and invoicing, but not much else.

At the other end of the spectrum, for

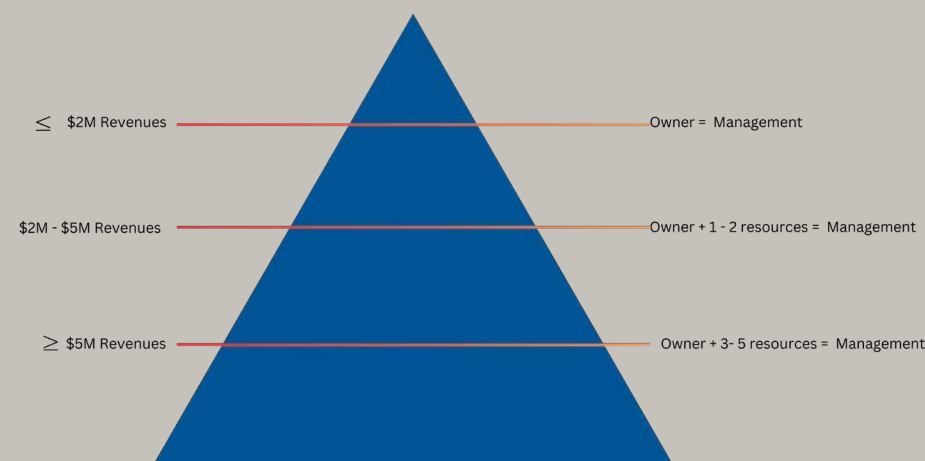
the SMB precision manufacturer with revenues of \$5M or more, succession planning centers around identifying the back-up resources for the critical positions in the company. In other words, the owner is typically no longer totally responsible and accountable for every business function. There may be an operations manager/director; there may be a quality manager/director; there may be a procurement resource, and/or there may even be a

sales resource on the team. As the company grew larger and more sophisticated, the owner expanded the management team out of pure necessity.

Regardless of where the precision manufacturer is along the SMB spectrum, the message is the same: the “next man or woman up” should be identified for every critical position. That person (or those people) should be receiving formal training and hands-on development opportunities so that they are prepared when their number is called. The long-term viability of the company depends upon it.

It is important to note that succession planning also encompasses being prepared for the planned and/or unplanned exits of company ownership. Planned exits include the orderly transition of the business from one family member (or members) to another or the intentional sale of the company to a third party. Unplanned exits are often characterized by the 5 Ds—death, disability, divorce, disagreements, and/or distress.

With 50% of business transitions being involuntary and forced, the urgency to prepare cannot be overstated. Astonishingly, 80-90% of a business owner’s wealth is often tied up in their company, yet 60% are unaware of their exit options. With 40% of SMB precision manufacturing owners aiming to sell in the next five years, the need for planning and guidance is immediate. The good news is that succession planning problems are solvable with the right attention, tools, and support. Proactive measures can not only safeguard your business but also ensure a smoother transition, whether it’s planned or unplanned.





# REVENUE POWERS SUCCESSION IN OWNERSHIP & CONTROL

By Ed Marsh, Founder, Consilium Global Business Advisors

## PLANNING FOR WHAT'S NEXT

We each hear the term *succession planning* through our own filter. It may be concerning or exciting. We might ask “Succession in what? Leadership? Ownership?” The reality is that it ranges from very complex family and estate planning challenges around privately held company ownership to simply identifying who would step in to fill a leadership role should the need arise.

*I find three common succession related topics in working with small and medium sized industrial manufacturers.*

1. An effort is underway to establish a board of directors or advisors, or

improve governance, to plan proactively for the transition of CEO level leadership.

2. An owner of a privately held business doesn't want to sell out, but doesn't see ownership succession options to preserve the culture when there's no family to step in.

3. A company plans to grow without risky bets when the next generation, or new owners take over in control succession.

Let's look at these situations through a revenue growth lens and based on my personal experiences as a certified independent director, Army veteran, and marketing and sales consultant to industrial firms.

## BOARD GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION

A board of directors represents a company's owners, and hires, fires and oversees the CEO. In small companies the founder is often the sole owner, sole director and the CEO. Stubborn entrepreneurs often prefer to avoid relinquishing any control.

However, an independent (outside) board can fill a valuable role even for small privately held companies. They bring perspectives from different industries and professional disciplines (e.g., HR, marketing, sales, cybersecurity) and help shape strategy by merging complementary perspectives. In their role managing

the CEO, the board is always planning for eventualities including the CEO suddenly becoming incapacitated or deciding to retire on short notice. This can include internal talent, interim leadership and a plan for external search.

Both The Private Directors Association and National Association of Independent Directors offer resources for companies seeking to implement or improve their board governance and operations — in preparation for important duties like succession planning. Elizabeth Hammack's book, “The Private Company Board of Directors Book,” offers insights for both directors and owners who are considering the role of the board in succession planning.

## OWNERSHIP TRANSITIONS WHEN THERE'S NO HEIR APPARENT

Often owners concentrate intently on work until the day they suddenly realize they want a change. When there aren't family members jockeying for the corner office, they may regret not exploring options earlier. Maybe they'd rather not sell to investors or a competitor, and an employee stock ownership plan might not make sense. They don't want to just shut it down.

A recently accelerating trend of military veterans buying businesses may provide a win-win situation.

While veterans are valued for their skills, and inclined toward entrepreneurship, not everyone wants to work for “the man,” or start something from scratch. Franchisors have long courted veterans, and now a growing number of boomer owned companies without clear ownership succession plans are finding their next chapter in acquisition by veterans.

Often loan guarantees will facilitate traditional financing. Owner financing may be appropriate, and a parallel trend of crowd funding is helping veterans make these business acquisitions. (Check out Folla Capital for more info.)

## CHERISHING AND LETTING GO

One of the hardest tasks of succession is deciding what to preserve and what to change. Some elements of product, culture, people and process define the

WE EACH HEAR THE TERM  
SUCCESSION PLANNING  
THROUGH OUR OWN FILTER.  
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company. Others served a purpose (or personal preference) at one point, but may no longer.

For Gens 3 and 4 these naturally difficult choices are subject to scrutiny and second guessing by family members who depend on the business. They're acutely aware of their responsibility to the legacy, and continued financial success. (Here's another place a good board with independent directors can help.) Generally, I find they should focus on marketing and sales.

The product, manufacturing and

operations have all evolved to satisfy customer demands. There may be some sacred cows, but generally the market has forced a company to innovate at least as fast as expectations change.

In contrast, sales and marketing are often ossified around outdated models of how the founders sold and buyers of the same generation bought... a couple decades ago. Strong products and recognized brands have largely sold themselves, so aside from periodic economic cycles, companies have grown despite outdated marketing and sales.

Markets and buyer expectations are changing rapidly as digital natives assume generational control over business. That creates an inherent tension. Incoming leaders and owners buy differently and recognize the dissonance in how their companies still sell—but there's inertia to overcome, naysayers to challenge and the burdens of tradition and risk aversion.

Here's some guidance. Cherish, celebrate and retain those elements of product, culture, people and process upon which today's thriving company is built. Create an inhouse museum to formalize that celebration. But, recognize that the next sale is neither deserved nor guaranteed. Decide to market and sell with a mindset that's meeting your buyers in their overwhelmed hyperkinetic world.

That will help to thrive through succession.





## LEGAL: REQUESTED ACCOMMODATIONS



Employers frequently encounter requests for accommodation from employees with a medical condition. How they respond to such requests can mean the difference between a positive experience and a satisfied, productive employee, and a negative experience involving litigation.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) requires employers with at least 15 employees to provide reasonable accommodations to

individuals with a disability. Generally, the employee starts the accommodation process by notifying the employer that they have a medical condition which requires some form of accommodation. The employee’s request commences what often is referred to as the interactive process between the employer and employee.

After receiving the accommodation request, the employer should determine whether the employee has a disability under the ADA. While amendments to the ADA have made it easier for individuals to establish they have a disability, an employer should still take this initial step to ensure compliance with its obligations under the ADA. Employers can ask the employee to obtain documentation from their health care provider about their medical condition and then provide that information to the employer.

After confirming the employee has a disability, the employer must then evaluate the reasonableness of the accommodation requested to determine if it can approve the request, or whether additional information is needed. Throughout this process, it is crucial for the employer and employee to continue their discussion and exchange information to ensure the accommodation agreed to is what the employee needs to perform the essential functions of their position. Accommodations can take many forms, including facility or equipment modifications, work schedule changes, and time off from work, among others.

Employers can minimize the potential for liability under the ADA by participating in the interactive process with the employee and considering reasonable accommodation requests that are supported by medical documentation. Ignoring or refusing to engage in the process instead of working with the employee can have costly results.



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## ADVOCACY: DC CHECK-IN



Here’s a quick look at the stories out of Washington making an impact on the metalworking industry this month:

**Hearing Announced in USTR USMCA Autos Review:** The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative has announced a public hearing on February 7, 2024, to inform its biennial review of trade in automotive goods, including rules of origin, under the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). The mandated review will result in a report delivered to Congress by July 1, 2024.

The rules of origin requirements under USMCA have been the subject of disagreement since the deal between the three countries went into effect.

**White House Creates Supply Chain Council:** The Biden administration announced on November 27, 2023, the creation of a Cabinet-level Council on Supply Chain Resilience. The Council will advise the administration on President Biden’s long-term, government-wide strategy to strengthen U.S. supply chains and build supply chain resilience.

The Council is tasked with undergoing a quadrennial supply chain review, to be completed by December 31, 2024. As part of the review, the council will update key criteria on critical industries, sectors, and products.

**EPA Announces Oil & Gas Methane Rule:** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a new final rule targeting methane emissions from the oil and gas sector on December 2, 2023, which aims to limit emissions from new and existing oil and gas production, processing, transport, and storage facilities. The announcement comes as the U.S. has joined other world leaders in the United Arab Emirates for the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28). EPA unveiled its initial methane emissions proposal during the November 2021 U.N. climate conference in Scotland, while the agency also released its supplemental proposal at the 2022 conference in Egypt.

For details about these issues and more, please visit [www.metalworkingadvocate.org](http://www.metalworkingadvocate.org).



*Omar S. Nashashibi is a founding partner with The Franklin Partnership, LLC, a bipartisan lobbying and strategic consulting firm based in Washington, D.C., and a member of NTMA’s advocacy team in Washington, D.C.*

## HR: CREATING A CULTURE OF APPRECIATION



How can you positively impact your company culture through employee recognition and engagement?

1. **Frequent Recognition:** Implement a system for frequent and specific recognition. This can be as simple as a “kudos” board, appreciation wall, or regular shout-outs during team meetings.
2. **Peer-to-Peer Recognition:** Empower employees to recognize their peers. Encourage a culture where appreciation doesn’t just flow top-down but also horizontally.
3. **Flexible Scheduling:** Show appreciation for your employees’ hard work by offering flexible scheduling options or extra paid time off as a reward for meeting targets or goals.
4. **Listening Sessions:** Conduct regular feedback sessions where employees can express their thoughts and concerns. Act on feedback to show you value their input.
5. **Mentoring and Training:** Offer mentorship or training opportunities to help employees develop their skills and advance in their careers. This demonstrates investment in their growth.

6. **Work-Life Balance:** Encourage work-life balance by allowing flexible work hours, remote work options, or compressed work weeks.

7. **Small Tokens of Appreciation:** Consider small, low-cost tokens of appreciation like coffee gift cards, personalized thank you notes, or branded company merchandise.

8. **Celebration of Milestones:** Celebrate birthdays, work anniversaries, and other personal milestones with a small office celebration.

9. **Encourage Employee-Led Initiatives:** Empower employees to come up with their own ideas to promote a culture of gratitude and recognize their peers.

By implementing these cost-effective strategies, you will reduce turnover and increase productivity while also creating a better overall experience for the employees.



*Adam Daines, ADDA’s founder and CEO brings many years of experience and expertise in Building HR Departments, Human Capital Planning, Employee Coaching, Interview Training, International HR, Talent Management and is a Certified EI Trainer. He may be reached at: [adam.daines@addainfusion.com](mailto:adam.daines@addainfusion.com).*

# In the Know



We’ll check in each month with industry experts to highlight issues that are timely and relevant to our members.

If you have a question you’d like answered by one of our partners, please send it to:  
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# SUCCESSION SUCCESS

By Allison Giddens, COO, Win-Tech

Win-Tech is a small business manufacturer just outside of Atlanta. It provides customers with precision manufactured parts and supports our nation's defense through aerospace parts. More than 30 years ago, when Win-Tech was much smaller, John Hudson was interviewed by Win-Tech founder and owner Dennis Winslow to fill a "shop help" role, which essentially translated to sweeping the floors and learning how to operate a mill.

Dennis asked John, "Where do you see yourself in 20 years?"

John nodded at Dennis' chair, smiling: "Sitting there."

In 2006, looking for a change from a large corporate job, Allison Giddens called Dennis Winslow and asked if he was hiring. As a teenager, she was his neighborhood pet sitter and helped create Win-Tech's first website. Dennis offered Allison an Office Assistant position, paying 30% less than what she

was making at her comfortable corporate job. When he saw the disappointment on the 24-year old's face, he said, "If you trust me, you could run this place one day."

In November 2018, Allison and John walked into Dennis' office with a list of ideas and changes they wanted to make. During the conversation, Dennis grinned knowingly: "You think this is easy? How about this? Starting Monday, the two of you will be in charge. I'll come to check in once a week, sign checks, and walk the shop. If you like doing this in a year, I'll let you buy it from me."

John became responsible for the shop. He quoted jobs, accepted orders, and scheduled production. He managed the portfolio of customers and determined what work to pursue based on Win-Tech expertise and industry demands. Allison became responsible for business operations. She



handled Human Resources, Finance and Accounting, and IT. She oversaw administrative and purchasing functions.

In January 2020, Dennis, John, and Allison decided that they would officially begin the transition and sale, which finalized October 1, 2020. Here are some considerations and lessons learned during that journey:

**Consider key dates that affect the business during the transition time.** For Win-Tech, their AS9100 recertification audit fell during the Spring 2020. It was important to prioritize the audit and not allow for business-sale distraction. Other dates a business may consider are planned machine downtime or upgrades, holidays, or retirement dates from key leaders in the shop.

**If multiple people are buying the business, determine the buyer relationship in advance.** John and Allison decided that since Win-Tech was always veteran-owned, it made most sense to make John (also a veteran) majority owner to maintain that veteran-owned status that Win-Tech customers had come to expect.

**Get a business valuation.** Is this an assets sale? A stock purchase? Is there real estate involved? Are there product lines designed and owned by the company included in the sale? Is operating cash included, or is the seller taking cash out of the business before the sale? How will Work in Progress be considered? What business liabilities or loans exists? These are all things to consider and share with the company or companies providing the business valuation. If the valuation is significantly higher or lower than anticipated, ask more questions, or consider a second opinion.

**Hire attorneys.** Win-Tech had a long-tenured attorney that represented Dennis in the business sale transaction.

John and Allison found an attorney through their networks to represent them. Attorneys can be costly and at times, may appear to elevate the tension in negotiations, but hiring legal professions protects the buyer, the seller, and the company.

**Hire accountants to help verify existing records.** There was a strong level of trust between the Win-Tech accounting firm and Allison, who handled day-to-day finances, but Allison and John hired a separate financial firm to perform a review of records.

**It's personal!** It is hard to not be emotionally invested in something you spent decades building. A company like Win-Tech has another layer of value to an owner like Dennis. As a buyer with a relationship to the seller, it's important to be kind if you intend on maintaining a relationship after the sale.

**Follow through with detailed due diligence.** A buyer should verify that business legal records and taxes are up-to-date, and that they can identify any existing Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) Filings listed on a credit report. Does the company own the copyright or trademark to the business name? Is the business compliant with customer contractual flow-down? This is particularly important when working in the defense contracting space.

**Be hyper-aware of employee chatter.** Be prepared if you believe rumors may negatively affect the business. There may be key employees to bring into high-level conversations if the buyer and seller agree.

**Be creative.** Seek out professionals through industry referrals to help craft a business purchase agreement. Are you considering an owner-finance? Applying for a small business loan? There are professionals in the marketplace who will help walk through

scenarios to see what tax implications are to the buyer and seller.

**Get organized early!** The process can be overwhelming. Consider creating a secure file share where the buyer and seller can exchange information attorneys will need — Articles of Incorporation, financial records, tax returns, etc. Use information from the hired legal and accounting professionals to curate a timeline to track due dates of tasks through the anticipated closing date of the sale. The work does not stop once the signature is on paper. Many customers and regulatory bodies require notification of business sales within a specific time. As a buyer, you may wish to benchmark data early on your ownership to help you set goals.

John and Allison were fortunate to have more than a year of "training wheels" to their company ownership journey. There were not many surprises they encountered once they took on Win-Tech.

Three years later, John and Allison still keep Dennis up to date with happenings at the shop, and Dennis is known for stopping by to say "hello" and give advice when asked. John and Allison are grateful Dennis has faith in them to continue to run his legacy.

Who would have thought, 30 years ago, that John and Allison would be running Win-Tech?

Dennis Winslow. That's who.





# MEMBER PROFILE: RICAURTE PRECISION INC.

**HERNAN RICAURTE, PRESIDENT, RICAURTE PRECISION INC.**

**WHO WE ARE:**

Ricaurte Precision Inc. (RPI) is a leading precision machining (CNC) company serving the aerospace, defense, space and medical device industries since 1986. We invest heavily in automation and digital technologies ensuring scalability, capacity and consistency in quality. Our data driven team is committed to driving efficiency and improvements throughout our facility. Precision machining (CNC) has significantly advanced over the past thirty years. From manual machines to CNC, to automation and robotics, and through digital technologies. From tribal knowledge to systems and processes. From “Jack of all trades,” to highly trained specialists optimizing available technologies and techniques. Ricaurte Precision Inc. has outgrown the “machine shop” label and is committed to pursuing the most appropriate opportunities for our growth and improvement, while consistently improving the level of service we provide our customers.

**WHAT WE DO:**

RPI provides turn-key precision machining services to world leading aerospace, defense, space and medical device companies that require new product introduction (NPI) to production machining of their precision parts and components. We carefully document and plan out every job through our digital ERP (ProShop ERP) and digital QMS (HighQA) systems. Prior to even winning a new project or part order, we carefully document and plan out internally through our digital quoting system (Paperless Parts) to ensure all information is appropriately captured, reviewed and organized. We maximize the use of advanced programming and simulation software to ensure successful set up and machining on our Live tooling lathes with automated barfeeders, our Wire EDM’s and our 5 Axis automated pallet systems. Machine monitoring (Datanomix) is a crucial component in our processes allowing RPI to automatically capture valuable data for both the validation of processes and for continuous improvement.



**WHAT WE DO REALLY WELL:**

What we do really well is listen to our customers and cater to their needs with our data driven resources and experience. Our success is not based on the technologies we’ve implemented, but in our ability to consistently drive efficiency and scalability in meeting customer needs. By carefully documenting all steps in our machining processes, we are able to quickly transition from new parts to production runs with lights out (24/7) machining in a matter of days.



**WHY WE ARE MEMBERS OF THE NTMA:**

The NTMA and our local chapter serve as a platform of collective experience and resources to help one another grow. We attribute much of RPI’s growth and success to the relationships, experiences and introductions to new technologies from our involvement in the NTMA. The NTMA and LA/NTMA provide the RPI team with a gateway of resources, but this value is only available when we are willing to step outside our business and participate in meetings, ask questions and seek the knowledge and experience from others. From the beginning I didn’t hesitate asking,

“what is in it for me?” and today I have no issue in asking others for their advice and input. We’ve benefited greatly and our team is always willing to give back, as we too gain from every interaction. The NTMA’s reach includes Work Force Development initiatives and Advocacy which are areas that affect us greatly. We are both grateful and inspired by our involvement in the NTMA. We enjoy sharing experiences and in collaborating with other likeminded precision machining leaders. There is so much to learn in this dynamic industry and there is so much we can do to help one another and our industry.

Beginning in 2024, we’re offering our members a chance to tell us about who they are and what they do. We’re showcasing NTMA companies that make our organization and our industry great.  
Would you like to see your business here?

**ANSWER THE QUESTIONS:**

Who are we?  
What do we do?  
What do we do REALLY well?  
Why are we members of the NTMA?

Send your response to:  
[editor@ntma.org](mailto:editor@ntma.org)

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# AFFINITY PARTNERS

## YOUR ALTERNATIVE TO TRADITIONAL EMPLOYER HEALTHCARE PLANS

By **TONY WINCKOWSKI, VP OF SALES AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS, ZYNERGIA**

Are you exploring your company's healthcare options in the new year? Zynergia, one of the NTMA's newest affinity partners, offers an innovative alternative to traditional healthcare programs. Introducing ECH. Employers for Cheaper Healthcare (ECH) is a non-profit focused on providing cost-effective quality healthcare to employees of member companies through the law of large numbers philosophy. Here's how it works. When it comes to healthcare, numbers matter. When companies band together as ECH member companies, they can spread the risk and reap the benefits of larger organizations. The result is lower-cost plans for employees with richer healthcare benefits. ECH utilizes proprietary cost control methods and their own third-party administrator to reduce costs and provide plans that encourage participation and access to a network of healthcare providers. This model also allows ECH to offer lower-level plan options for those employees who may have found employers' health plans cost prohibitive in the past. The ECH program not only offers an affordable, robust health plan to the employees of member companies, they educate and empower participants.

**MISSION:** Employers for Cheaper Healthcare is a non-profit organization whose members care deeply about providing cost-effective, quality healthcare to their employees. The organization's mission is to provide leadership on employer-related healthcare issues through communication, education and research.

ECH members are never alone. Committed to communication, education and research, the association partners with members to navigate the complexities of today's healthcare industry. You can count on ECH when it comes to your employer-related healthcare issues. The organization has a proven track record. In 2023, ECH renewals held steady with no increase in premium costs. In 2024, members actually saw a decrease in premiums at renewal time. And because costs matter, ECH is able to provide up-front costs of planned procedures before services. This takes

the guess work and the worry out of medical care. During stressful times, your employees can focus on their health, not the cost. Zynergia is able to provide these services because they are part of a larger family of healthcare companies called Boa Vida Healthcare. The parent organization is focused on all aspects of the healthcare process from IT to patient-physician relationships. Their mission is to deliver high-quality, compassionate, patient-centered healthcare and wellness to patients and families while revitalizing communities. If you're interested in learning more about your healthcare options through ECH, please contact Tony Winckowski, your NTMA connection at: [twinckowski@zynergiahr.com](mailto:twinckowski@zynergiahr.com) or 219.319.5083. You can also find more information online at: <https://ech-llc.com/partner/ntma/>

**Zynergia** A Trusted HR Partner



ECH member companies enjoy the advantages of healthcare with low premiums, low out-of-pocket cost, and low annual renewals with no enrollment nor employer contribution requirements.

## A PARTNER IN ALL THINGS HUMAN RESOURCES

By **SALLY AVENT, ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE, ADDA**

ADDA is a consulting firm that offers HR, Payroll, Benefits, and Talent solutions. Our Managed Services provide the administrative and strategic support of a full HR, Payroll, Talent, or Benefits department. Meanwhile, our Consulting Services help HR departments complete complex, specialized projects like implementing pay transparency or overseeing Human Capital Management (HCM) software implementations.

These approaches were tailor-made to address a problem that ADDA's founder and CEO, Adam Daines, saw for years. Over his decades-long career in both large consulting firms and in-house HR departments, he noticed that only large businesses could afford the kind of strategic resources that maximizes their most important asset: their employees.

Most businesses are big on energy but short on time, people, resources, and technology. Without expertise, they are exposed to lawsuits, high turnover, and penalties. That led Adam to mold ADDA into a solution that any business can

benefit from. With our help, companies of all sizes enjoy the security, strategic knowledge, and peace of mind they need to succeed.

Simply put, we make HR, Payroll, Benefits, and Talent easy, and that makes your job even easier.

By partnering with NTMA, we're pleased to offer members a complimentary cost analysis and discounted pricing. If you think that ADDA may be a good fit for your company, we'd love the opportunity to discuss our capabilities with you. Please call 719.344.1717, email [sally.avent@addainfusion.com](mailto:sally.avent@addainfusion.com) or visit [www.ADDAinfusion.com](http://www.ADDAinfusion.com) for more information.



*Here to Help*





EMERGING LEADERS I & II  
COHORT

This program will give new and aspiring young leaders the foundation for leadership and business acumen. It will provide the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to build confidence, productivity, and the capability to delegate and manage others.

\*Must have attended Emerging Leader I Cohort to be eligible for the Emerging Leader II Cohort\*

SALES TRAINING  
COHORT

Our Sales Training Cohort aims to enhance collaboration, knowledge sharing, and performance improvement among our participants, ultimately leading to more effective sales strategies and increased revenue generation within their companies. Special focus will be on value-added selling, messaging and strategies.

EXECUTIVE A&B  
COHORT

Currently employed owners or general managers will make up this cohort. Focusing on the daily challenges, opportunities and unknowns in running a manufacturing company, the purpose of our executive cohort is to foster collaboration, learning, and alignment among these top-tier professionals. These sessions provide a platform for sharing insights, brainstorming innovative ideas, and exchanging best practices.

COHORT A = <50 Employees  
COHORT B = >50 Employees

Deadline To Register: January 24, 2024

REGISTER  
TODAY!

COHORTS  
2024

Please contact Kristen Hrusch, our Events Manager for more information and to register:

Kristen Hrusch - [Khrusch@ntma.org](mailto:Khrusch@ntma.org) 216.264.2845  
or visit [www.ntma.org/upcoming-events](http://www.ntma.org/upcoming-events)

[www.ntma.org/events](http://www.ntma.org/events)



SCAN TO REGISTER

WINNING TOGETHER

JENNY STUPICA, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, NTMA

Welcome to Workforce WINS. This monthly feature will showcase ideas, resources and initiatives that can help you WIN in the pursuit of creating a resilient and adaptable workforce that can thrive in the face of evolving challenges.

We'll also share WINS from across the country — strategies and programs that have been successfully implemented to develop a talent pipeline, increase recruitment and employee retention and improve training.

As you can see, the word “WIN” can be used as a verb to indicate the action of doing something that will improve your outcomes, or as a noun to suggest a program or idea to be explored. We are committed to supporting you, our members, through efforts to understand your needs, provide valuable resources and create a supportive community that fosters growth, collaboration and mutual success.

So now that you know what Workforce WINS is all about, let's get started!



Did you know that 53% of new members indicate that networking is the number one reason they join NTMA? Networking provides a platform for individuals to share experiences, best practices and industry knowledge as well as an avenue to seek advice, discuss common challenges and collectively brainstorm solutions.

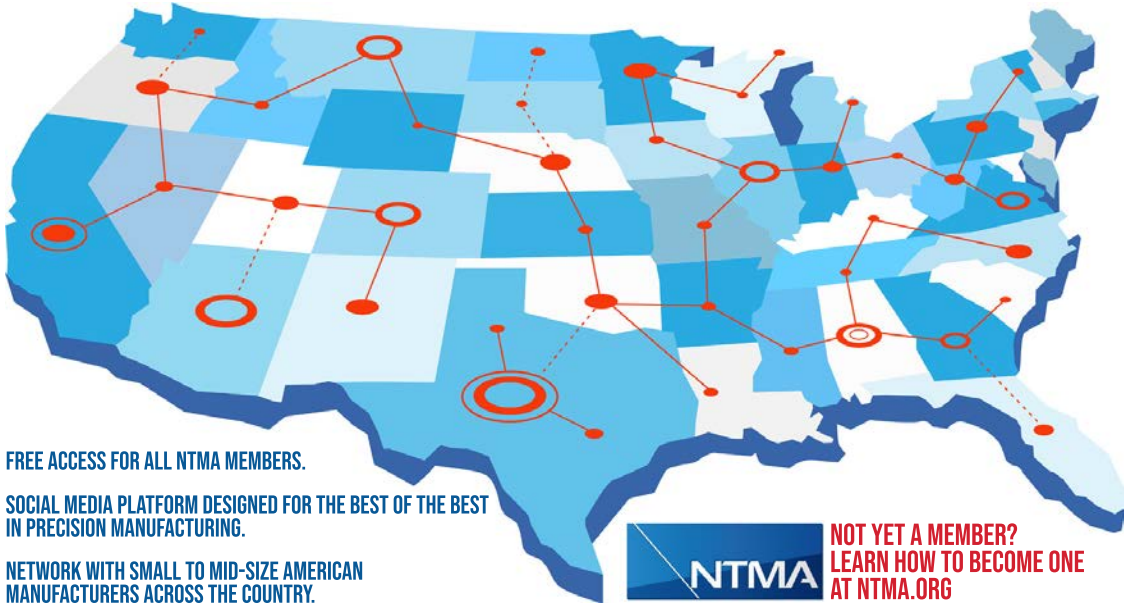
For chapter members, this is fairly easy as networking is a staple of chapter

meetings and events. However, for At-Large members, networking can be difficult as some members are in a geographic area without many peers or scheduled meetings and events where they can connect. We are going to change that.

To all At-Large Members: Beginning on Wednesday, February 28 at 2pm EST, we are going to host a quarterly At-Large Virtual Meeting that will provide the networking opportunities currently unavailable to you. These meetings will last an hour. While there will be talking points to get the conversation started, the hope is that you will share your challenges and successes to drive the conversation and learn from one another. An email invitation will be sent to you approximately one month prior to the February meeting. We hope you will join us!



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NTMA NOT YET A MEMBER?  
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AT NTMA.ORG



# CHAPTER CHECK-IN



## ST LOUIS CHAPTER CELEBRATES SUCCESSES WITH AN EYE TO THE FUTURE

By SALLY SAFRANSKI, OUTGOING CHAPTER EXECUTIVE, St. Louis NTMA

The St. Louis Chapter Annual Meeting followed a time-honored tradition — Board of Directors installation led by an NTMA leader. NTMA Vice-Chair Bonnie Kuhn led the Board's oath of office in November at a remarkable 50th Anniversary celebration and plant tour at Hellebusch Tool and Die in Washington, Missouri. The meeting's highlights also included member recognition and milestones. The chapter recognized seven members of the Emerging Leaders Cohort, NTMA Service Award recipient Tom McCarthy (McMahon Berger), members' anniversaries and other achievements from 2023. The evening concluded with a send-off to retiring Chapter Executive Sally Safranski.

The November 7 event was part of Hellebusch's two-day open house marking the 50th anniversary of Wally and Marilyn Hellebusch's 1973 business launch. Their new building was transitioned to a gathering place, complete with some of the company's original equipment and tools.



Wally addressed the group, remembering company milestones, which included three locations and ten additions. He commented on the challenges of one flood, eight recessions and a global pandemic. He concluded that the company has been tremendously blessed with a lot of great employees throughout the years who were committed to doing the job right.

Hellebusch Tool & Die specializes in the engineering and building of injection molds and dies for the plastics and die casting industries. Wally serves as President of Hellebusch, while daily operations are led by 2nd generation Vice President Jeff Hellebusch.

Bonnie Kuhn's two-day visit to the St. Louis area also included plant tours of Tool Specialties, Hydromat, Hellebusch Tool & Die, Chelar Tool & Die, Velocity Metalworks, HTS Coatings and Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC).




## GUEST SHARES KNOWLEDGE AND GENEROUS GIFT

By KAITY VAN AMERSFORT, CHAPTER EXECUTIVE, LA/NTMA

On Tuesday, November 7, 2023, LA/NTMA hosted Karla Lewis, CEO of Reliance Steel. Ms. Lewis shared a metals market with an audience of 100 members and industry partners. Reliance Steel also generously donated \$5000 to the California Manufacturing Workforce Foundation [LA/NTMA's 5019(c)(3)]. The foundation gives scholarships to students going into manufacturing careers.





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The Record 20

# Regional Connections



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# NATIONAL ASSOCIATE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: CLIENT GROWTH RESOURCES, INC.

By **GEORGE MANCUSO, CEO, CLIENT GROWTH RESOURCES, INC.**



Client Growth Resources (CGR) is a premier talent acquisition company that excels in providing the competitive edge your business needs in a rapidly evolving market. With an innovative approach to sourcing and recruiting top-tier manufacturing talent, CGR offers the ideal bridge between your company's objectives and the high-performing individuals who can help you achieve them.

Since 1986, I have been deeply immersed in the talent acquisition industry. CGR specializes in the diverse and dynamic world of manufacturing, encompassing all its facets. We cater to a broad spectrum of professionals within this sector, handling positions from mid-level roles right up to the C-suite. This breadth of experience allows us to provide unparalleled service to our clients and candidates alike.

CGR has a proven track record within the industry. We successfully match 85-90% of hiring requirements with a promotion rate of more than 54%. We aren't just committed to

filling positions, we are committed to identifying leaders who can drive growth and innovation.

**WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING SERVICES TO NTMA MEMBERS:**

**Tailored Talent Acquisition Solutions:** At CGR, we understand that each company has unique requirements. We tailor our search process to meet your specific needs, ensuring a perfect fit for both the company and the candidate.

**Expertise in the Industry:** Our recruiters have a deep knowledge and understanding of the tooling and manufacturing industry. We speak your language and understand the skills and competencies required for success in your sector.

**Access to Top Talent:** With an expansive network of industry professionals, we can connect you with the best talent in the field. Our team leverages its connections and uses advanced recruitment techniques to find candidates who meet your exact specifications.



**Efficiency and Effectiveness:** We understand the cost of a vacant position or a bad hire. Our refined recruitment process ensures quick turnaround times without compromising on the quality of the candidates.

**Personalized Service:** We believe in building relationships, not just making placements. Our team works closely with you throughout the recruitment process, ensuring transparency, open communication and a high level of personalized service.

We stand behind the quality and fitness of our placements with a robust one-year replacement guarantee, ensuring peace of mind with every hire. We take great pride in offering NTMA members an exclusive rate that is notably lower than the national average, reflecting our commitment to providing exceptional value.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss our services and determine if CGR is a good fit for your hiring needs. For more information or to book an appointment, please visit: [www.clientgrowthresources.com](http://www.clientgrowthresources.com)



How does the European market look relative to the United States? Are they facing some of the same challenges in workforce development? What about technology introduction? What is so different about a big trade show in Europe versus IMTS?

To explore business and cultural differences, tune into “Adventures with: Peter, Travis & Nicole.” The new IMTS+ video mini-series digs into those questions during a trip to the EMO show in Hannover, Germany, this past September. You can find all the videos on IMTS+ at [IMTS.com/AdventuresEMO](http://IMTS.com/AdventuresEMO).

EMO is often considered the IMTS of Europe. With that in mind, IMTS wanted to give the North American audience a view of EMO through three different perspectives. Our series features IMTS rock star Nicole Wolter, president and CEO of HM Manufacturing and chairperson of the Technology and Machining Association, visiting EMO for the first time; Travis Egan, AMT’s chief revenue officer, who works closely with AMT members and OEMs; and me, Peter Eelman, AMT’s chief experience officer.

### SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

We connect with familiar companies and people, including:

- Mike Cicco, president and CEO of

# MANUFACTURER LEADERS ABROAD: AN EMO SHOW REPORT

By **PETER EELMAN, CXO, AMT**

## adventures with Peter, Travis & Nicole

- FANUC America Corp.
- Brendt Holden, president of HAIMER USA
- Gisbert Ledvon, vice president of marketing at HEIDENHAIN North America
- Alexander Zoller, president of ZOLLER Inc.
- Jelle De Roovere, managing director at RoboJob GmbH
- Barbara Colombo, CEO of FICEP Spa and president of UCIMU-SISTEMI PER PRODURRE, the Italian association of manufacturers of machine tools, robots, and automation systems

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- Even though Germany is renowned for its tradition of skilled trade apprenticeships, Germany and Europe also have the same labor challenges as the United States.
- To address the issue, EMO has a big focus on digitalization, robotics, and extending automation beyond the machine (much like IMTS).
- One of the EMO themes is a greater emphasis on companies reducing their carbon footprint. A particular machine launched at EMO may have the same features as one introduced at IMTS, but in Europe, a reduction in energy consumption will be a bigger selling point.
- Women leaders in manufacturing

- face similar challenges as they build their careers. Nicole Wolter’s conversation with Barbara Colombo is a must-watch interview for aspiring young women in manufacturing. Visit [IMTS.com/EMOWomenLeaders](http://IMTS.com/EMOWomenLeaders).
- Some markets show better resiliency to economic softening, including aerospace.

### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

European trade shows emphasize socializing. Many exhibitors have a sit-down biergarten or café. Larger exhibitors may even offer a full lunch service. You may discuss business during lunch, but recognize that Europeans value relationships. They take the opportunity to get to know people at shows like EMO, so don’t pass up an opportunity to linger over an espresso. If you happen to enjoy beer, raise a glass and toast your business companion with a hearty “ein prosit!” (a toast!)

### CHEERS TO FUTURE ADVENTURERS

Sip, savor, and explore more episodes on international trade shows and learn more about the European manufacturing industry and newly introduced products on IMTS+ at [IMTS.com/AdventuresEMO](http://IMTS.com/AdventuresEMO).

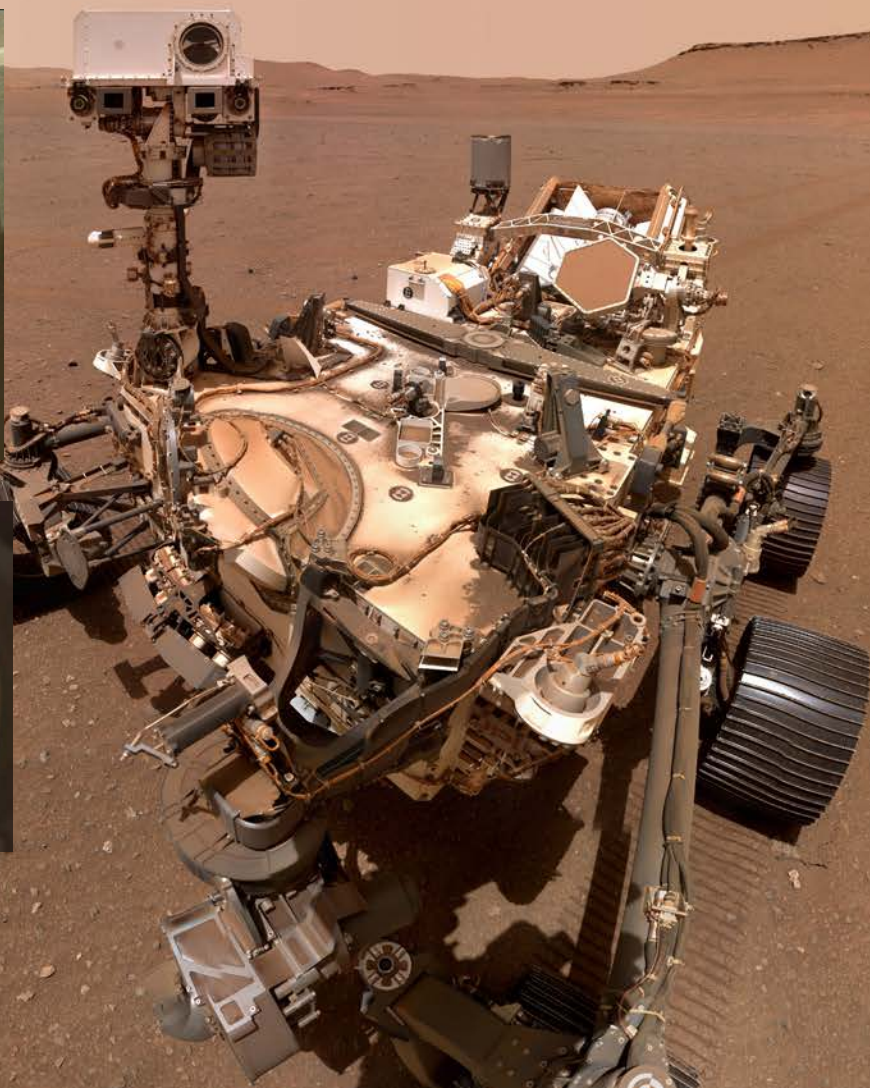
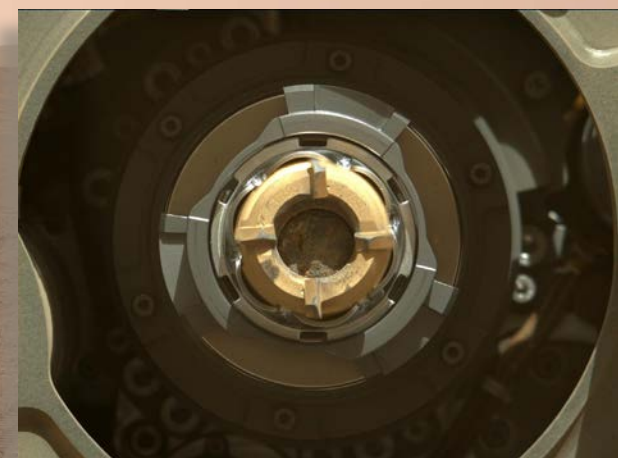


Serving Members

In The News







We are very proud to be an American manufacturer working with some of the finest organizations in the world and being involved with programs like the Mars Perseverance Rover. We manufactured many of the complicated components that help the rover do important work on Mars. We also manufacture many rocket components that helped get Perseverance across our solar system. We were all glued to the TV screen as we watched the launch, and all celebrated the success of the mission. It was somewhat surreal to think about parts that we touched and were a part of, literally going out of this world, to spend the rest of its time on Mars. It was thrilling to all of us when it started sending pictures back to NASA who then tweeted photos of some of our parts doing their job. Of the many different programs we've been involved with over the last 50 years, and the tremendous pride we take in our craft and workmanship, this one is truly in rare air. We can hardly wait until the samples that Perseverance is preparing now are launched off Mars and returned to NASA for analysis. Go humanity, go USA, and go NTMA!

GREG DYSINGER, SALES & MARKETING MANAGER, DYSINGER INCORPORATED



The Record 24

*We Made That™*

# GIVE US YOUR BEST SHOT.

## NTMA PHOTO CONTEST



WE WANT TO SEE OUR MEMBERS IN ACTION! You're invited to enter the inaugural NTMA Photo Contest. Send us your favorite picture from your shop floor, your team at work or a unique precision part. The winning image will be on the cover of The Record and the winning company will have a full-length feature in our magazine.

We're looking for action shots, close-ups and images that convey emotion. We want to see the faces of the NTMA. The winner will be notified by the end of March 2024. Runners-up may also be featured in future issues of The Record.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE SEND YOUR SUBMISSIONS TO: [EDITOR@NTMA.ORG](mailto:EDITOR@NTMA.ORG)







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