

for **THE RECORD**

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

BUILDING A THRIVING ECOSYSTEM

PLANT, CULTIVATE AND GROW

ALSO INSIDE:

BRIDGING EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY
PAGE 24

MEMBER CELEBRATES 80 YEARS
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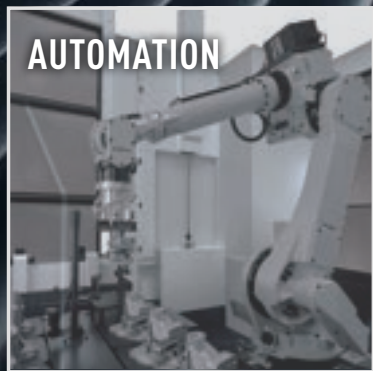
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SEND US YOUR STORY

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 1st of the month prior to publication.

For more information, contact
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UPCOMING NTMA EVENTS



OCTOBER 7 - 10, 2025
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FROM ROGER

a message from the president

The first few months of 2025 have been interesting. Since the change in presidential administrations, change and disruption have been the norm and non-stop. I'm not saying that change is good or bad, but change itself is disruptive and perceived chaos affects our industry and our individual businesses. It's tempting to be paralyzed by change and do nothing.

If you reflect on the unplanned pandemic of 2020, you'll recall that our industry was not paralyzed. We rose to the challenges it presented us. We did it without being told, without a template to follow. For some of us it presented great opportunities while others faced great challenges, but we all reacted to the moment and survived. I see the recent chaos coming out of Washington in much the same way. We cannot let it paralyze us. We must analyze and react to the opportunities and challenges it brings and adjust our businesses accordingly. We cannot wait and hope.

It will be those who adapt, change and move forward that will overcome the unplanned chaos of tariffs, budget

cuts or executive orders. At the end of the day, one of the positive results might very well be an increase in the reshoring of manufacturing back to the U.S. It may not happen overnight, but preparing now might be to our advantage soon. It is time to put our best sales efforts out and prepare for the future.

As an industry, we must continue to focus on how to reduce our costs and increase performance and efficiencies while increasing profitability. I realize that's a tall order, but the reality is, it's the truth. Advances in equipment, workholding, tooling and programming must impact our performance. Those who have been in the industry for years will likely go straight to the shop floor for improvements. I challenge us all to think more broadly when targeting improvements and cost reductions. Look to the office, the shop and everywhere in between. The opportunities are there; we have to look for them. Before 5S and 6S came on the scene, we thought our shops were clean and organized until our eyes were trained to see the opportunities

for organization, safety and cleanliness. Cost reductions are not much different; they are there if you train your eye to see them. Once you see them, others see them. When others see them, everyone starts to see them.

This month our focus is on ecosystems... do you know who's in your company's ecosystem? I'm talking about all the support companies from raw materials, to outside services, to packing, shipping and others. We have said that if our customers understood us better, we could perform better and possibly even reduce our costs. Well, the same holds true for those in your company's ecosystem. Organizational researcher, Senior Fellow at Harvard Law and author James Moore defines a business ecosystem as, "An economic community supported by a foundation of interacting organizations and individuals — the organisms of the business world."

At the end of the day, if we could better coordinate our activities and needs with those companies that we interact with, we could have a competitive

advantage with both our current and potential customers. This may include improved performance, quality and costs. Additionally, you may elevate your company and your ecosystem to be the supplier of choice to your customer. Those who never consider the impact of their ecosystem will continue to face the challenges of this industry alone. In this industry "alone" is not a good place to be or stay.

It is worth your time to list those companies in your ecosystem and how they directly or indirectly interact with your business. Once you understand your ecosystem, find ways to collaborate with those businesses and organizations to work together for the good of all. As the old adage goes, "Work smarter, not harder." For manufacturers, working hard is in our nature, but with the tools available to us it's

time we decided to "work smarter." Please sign me up to be first in line.

NTMA is focused on bringing tools to our members that support change, improvement, opportunity and profitability. As a member, you are automatically included in a community of companies and partners across the U.S. all willing to support each other. We understand that for American manufacturing to grow and improve, we must all evaluate our performance and contribution.

Don't go it alone; engage with NTMA as we "Manufacture America's Future."

Roger Atkins, President, NTMA

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Founded in 2000 by Daniel Stokes, Northside Machine & Tool, Inc. has built a strong reputation over the past two decades as a trusted tool and die shop serving central Indiana and beyond. In May 2023, the company was acquired by L & A Machine Inc., owned by Lester Williams II, who brings more than 20 years of hands-on experience in machining, manufacturing and shop management. With a deep-rooted passion for precision work and continuous improvement, Lester is carrying on the legacy of quality and integrity that Northside was built on — while expanding capabilities and services to better meet modern industry demands.

Northside Machine & Tool offers a wide range of services including CNC production parts, rapid prototyping, welding, fabrication, waterjet cutting, forming, assembly, precision milling and turning and machine maintenance and repair. We support customers in a variety of industries such as automotive, heavy equipment, food production and transportation. Our team works closely with engineering departments and R&D teams to deliver high-quality prototype parts, short-run production and custom tooling solutions.

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Silicon Valley Elite Manufacturing (SVE) is a premier quick-turn CNC machine shop. Viking Tool and Gage, Incorporated is a progressive company specializing in the design and manufacture of tools, dies, gages and fabrication of various parts. Industries include automotive (OEM and aftermarket), medical, industrial, furniture, electronics and other commercial items. Processes include CNC machining (verticals, horizontals and lathes) grinding, wire EDM, stamping, laser cutting, sheet-metal fabrication, welding, powder coating and a variety of other operations. Viking combines high-precision machining with a large volume capability.



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Our editorial staff is currently scheduling member companies for our regular features:

WHO WE ARE & WE MADE THAT.

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MARKETING: ROOM TO GROW IN A NICHE MARKET



“You need to understand that our manufacturing company is very niche.” We hear this from nearly every manufacturer during our discovery meetings. The niche description they reference is an excuse for not targeting the best prospects and putting the effort into defining their ideal customer profile. By raising the niche concept, are companies implying that no one is left to sell to? Hardly.

IS MARKETING INEFFECTIVE FOR NICHE BUSINESSES?

“Marketing doesn’t work for us because we’re so niche.” Many manufacturers found that their initial growth came from networking, cold-calling and sheer determination, often with little or no formal marketing. However, these same companies likely have a website, printed sales sheets, business cards and perhaps even email campaigns or sponsored events: hence, marketing.


FINDING ROOM TO GROW IN A NICHE MARKET

So...why are we here discussing your niche? The answer is almost always the same: “We want more leads.” Finding manufacturing leads in a niche market requires managing and engaging more prospects. In today’s digital and more restrictive in-person sales environment, lead generation is achieved through a combination of marketing, public relations, web development, search engine optimization (SEO), database tools and automated marketing. There’s no one-size-fits-all solution. Lead generation requires a structured process and collaboration between sales and customer service teams.

So, there is room for expansion in their niche! Our process uncovers opportunities to penetrate your existing target market.

- How often does your team engage with prospects to stay top-of-mind?
- Are you confident your sales teams are focusing on the best leads? (BTW, what ARE your best leads? See “The Evolution of Lead Generation: From Postcards to Real-Time Conversions”)
- Would you want metrics to track this process and align it with your target accounts?

If this sounds like work, it’s because it is. But it’s worth it.

 Rob Felber is the President of Felber PR & Marketing, specializing in helping B2B manufacturers amplify their messaging, generate leads and build lasting industry credibility. Now in its 32nd year, Felber works with owners, presidents and sales managers creating and executing comprehensive marketing and industrial trade media campaigns. He may be reached at: RobFelber@FelberPR.com

ADVOCACY: OSHA HEAT RULE PUBLIC HEARING & CEQ NEPA TEMPLATE



The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) announced that it will hold a public hearing on the proposed rule to address heat hazards in both indoor and outdoor work environments. The proposed rule, published on August 30 after being announced by OSHA in July 2024, outlines the requirements for employers when the heat index reaches 80°F or higher. The

virtual public hearing will occur on June 16, 2025 and will “continue on subsequent weekdays if necessary.”

One Voice submitted formal comments to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) on January 14, 2025, on the notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) In the submitted comments, One Voice stated that while member companies recognize the importance of providing a safe work environment for their employees and have been proactive in finding measures to ensure that high temperatures do not pose a hazard in the workplace, “the approach taken in the NPRM that prescribes few options for compliance, without accounting for the differences across industries and sectors.”

In the coming months, OSHA will post information on how to view the public hearing on the rulemaking webpage for the NPRM at: <https://www.osha.gov/heat-exposure/rulemaking>

Additionally, One Voice is monitoring action from the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). The council is in the process of developing a draft template to guide agencies, such as the EPA, following the revocation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) implementing rule. On February 25, 2025, CEQ issued an interim final rule revoking CEQ’s NEPA regulations and replaced it with guidance that directs agencies to rely on their individual NEPA regulations. Then on April 8, CEQ issued a memo ordering agencies to rescind their own existing rules on implementing NEPA and develop non-binding guidance. Under NEPA, the requirement to prepare an environmental impact study applies to any “major federal action” that could potentially have significant impacts on the environment.



Omar S. Nashashibi is founding member of Inside Beltway, a bipartisan lobbying and strategic consultant firm based in Washington, D.C. He may be reached at: omar@insidebeltway.com

SUCCESSION: DETERMINE YOUR PREFERRED SUCCESSION PATH



In our series thus far, you have learned the initial steps in succession or exit planning: commit to a timeline, understand the value of your business and complete your retirement needs analysis. Now you’re ready to start your transition plan.

The most common exit strategies are: completing a transfer to insiders, selling to a third party or becoming an investor/owner.

DO I HAVE KEY EMPLOYEES OR “INSIDERS” WHO COULD SUCCESSFULLY LEAD MY BUSINESS?

These could include your children, children by marriage or non-related key employees. Caution: You must be radically objective about whether these individuals are truly capable of running your business, and if they are even interested in doing so.

SHOULD I SELL MY BUSINESS TO A THIRD PARTY?

This can be the most financially lucrative option — but to maximize the value of your life’s work, you’ll want to begin early to “dress it up” in order to make your business attractive to potential buyers and maximize its value. That involves identifying and eliminating risk.

SHOULD I BECOME AN INVESTOR/OWNER?

Oftentimes, the proceeds of selling your business will not fully replace the income you require in retirement. Let’s say you sell your business for \$3M, take a 20% tax hit, and net \$2.4M. If you earn 4-5% on that amount (a reasonable distribution amount), your replacement income would be about \$120,000 per year. But today, your business is providing you with an annual income of \$300,000, plus discretionary expenses. It may make more sense to become an investor/owner who hires a professional manager to operate (and grow) your company. This path is certainly worth exploring.

Depending on the size of your business, you may also want to consider Employee Stock Ownership Plans or ESOPs. These provide tremendous legacy and tax planning benefits, along with a significant wealth-building opportunity for remaining employees of the company.

For any successful transition, an owner MUST begin to plan early and fully explore various scenarios because life — and an exit plan— don’t always go how we hope.

Begin exploring your path forward by scanning the QR code on the back cover.

SUCCESSION+

Mark J. Dorman AIF, CLU, ChFC, CEPA, CFBS helps small and mid-sized businesses plan for a successful exit. In his 40-year career, he has counseled hundreds of privately-held businesses and has purchased, founded and exited businesses of his own. <https://succession.plus/us/linkedin.com/in/markjdorman>

REVENUE: BUILD QUALITY INTO YOUR SALES KPIs



Production numbers are only meaningful if the products produced and counted meet required quality standards. If not, they’re a waste.

The same applies to our sales KPIs. If we rely on them to track effectiveness and measure improvement, they must meet consistent quality standards.

Take close rate for instance.

Close rate is the quotient of deals closed/won in the numerator, and total deals in the denominator. Closed/won is normally clear. We might not like the number, but it’s unlikely there’s confusion or ambiguity.

Total deals is a different story. What is a “deal?” Is it a contact who has described pain and a desire to fix it? The result of a successful discovery meeting? A company to which we’ve sent a quote? Or an opportunity that has been rigorously qualified against a scorecard that gauges fit and qualification?

Obviously, the close rate ratio will vary wildly depending on which of these we pick for the denominator. And if we don’t have a clear definition, then it can vary from rep to rep, and even month to month for reps. That variation results in a close rate value that’s unreliable. That in turn means that our ability to measure the impact of process improvements is limited.

The solution is to use “qualified opportunities” in the denominator, to have a clearly defined definition for qualified, and to have managers use a scorecard to help reps apply qualification standards and maintain accountability to the process.

When we do that, our forecasts improve in the short term, and we’re able to track the impact of training, coaching and process optimization on our sales effectiveness.



Ed Marsh helps B2B industrial companies grow revenue by improving strategy, marketing, sales and technology. He’s a veteran, independent board director and has run industrial companies. He can be reached at: www.EdMarshConsulting.com

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ECOSYSTEMS:

More than just a third grade science lesson

If you will, take yourself back for a moment. It was probably somewhere around the third grade. As you put away your math book and got out your science text the teacher said, “Today, we’re going to learn about ecosystems.”

She likely went on to explain what an ecosystem was, probably using something similar to the Britannica definition: An ecosystem is made up of all of the living and nonliving things in an area. This includes all of the plants, animals and other living things that make up the communities of life in an area. An ecosystem also includes nonliving materials — for example, water, rocks, soil and sand. A swamp, a prairie, an ocean and a forest are examples of ecosystems.

And, that may very well be the last time you gave it much thought.

However, if you found yourself in a college business class or discussing strategy in a boardroom, you may be familiar with the expanded definition first introduced by James Moore in his 1996 book, “The Death of Competition: Leadership & Strategy in the Age of Business Ecosystems.”

According to Moore, there are distinct ecosystems in the business world. Moore says, a business ecosystem is “an economic community supported by a foundation of interacting organizations and individuals — the organisms of the business world. The economic community produces goods and services of value to customers, who are themselves members of the ecosystem. The member

organisms also include suppliers, lead producers, competitors and other stakeholders. Over time, they coevolve their capabilities and roles, and tend to align themselves with the directions set by one or more central companies. Those companies holding leadership roles may change over time, but the function of ecosystem leader is valued by the community because it

enables members to move toward shared visions to align their investments, and to find mutually supportive roles.”

Reaching back to that elementary science class, it makes sense. If it works in the natural world, perhaps it’s the natural order of business, as well.

Now that it’s named, what does it look like? Moore’s concept has grown and others have researched and written much on the topic. At the heart of it all, the value for manufacturers lies in understanding the elements of your ecosystem and the interplay between participants. When we can

better understand how to utilize our own talents and the strengths of others in a mutually beneficial way, we move closer to a balanced ecosystem.

By definition, science characterizes a perfect ecosystem by balance, sustainability and resilience. It functions optimally, supports a diverse range of species, and maintains ecological harmony. It’s not so different in the world of business. When all of our components are working in balance, we grow, we thrive and our ecosystem will flourish.



“THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY PRODUCES GOODS AND SERVICES OF VALUE TO CUSTOMERS, WHO ARE THEMSELVES MEMBERS OF THE ECOSYSTEM. THE MEMBER ORGANISMS ALSO INCLUDE SUPPLIERS, LEAD PRODUCERS, COMPETITORS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS. OVER TIME, THEY COEVOLVE THEIR CAPABILITIES AND ROLES, AND TEND TO ALIGN THEMSELVES WITH THE DIRECTIONS SET BY ONE OR MORE CENTRAL COMPANIES.”

NTMA: YOUR PARTNER FOR GROWTH

CARRIE MARSICO, MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT, NTMA



Joining an association can significantly enhance your corporate ecosystem by fostering collaboration, innovation and industry-wide growth. Here's how being a member of NTMA can strengthen YOUR corporate ecosystem:

EXPANDING NETWORKS & PARTNERSHIPS

NTMA brings together industry players, facilitating networking and collaboration. This creates opportunities for strategic partnerships that strengthen all aspects of your business.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING & INNOVATION

Attending an NTMA conference or webinar allows members to share best practices, emerging trends and technological advancements. NTMA events are a great opportunity to take full advantage of your membership. Our events provide a collaborative and fun

environment to grow your network by meeting peers and industry executives, as well as experts in the manufacturing field. Our goal is to deliver relevant and exceptional content, provide energizing networking events and encourage growth within our member companies and the industry as a whole.

NTMA also conducts four benchmarking surveys annually: the Executive Compensation Survey (in January), the Operating Costs Survey (in March), the Business Conditions Report (July and December) and the Wage & Fringe Benefit Survey (in September). These surveys result in valuable benchmarking reports — available FREE to survey participants. What's in it for you? As a survey participant you will receive an individual financial performance report analyzing your company. This report compares your financial performance to industry standards.

ADVOCACY

NTMA works with One Voice to act as a unified voice to influence government policies, regulations and industry standards. This helps companies navigate compliance challenges and anticipate regulatory changes. Under One Voice, our Washington, D.C.-based lobbying and strategic communications firms work every day to ensure that the industry's voice is heard on Capitol Hill and in the media.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

NTMA-U is the foundation of NTMA's Training and Education program, delivering a Department of Labor-approved, registered apprenticeship program that serves the entire U.S. manufacturing sector. Designed by industry professionals, NTMA-U provides real-world knowledge to students, preparing them to thrive in a fast-evolving industry.

The self-paced, online courses feature video content led by an instructor, and the full three-year program costs members less than \$1,700, including training materials.

In addition to NTMA-U, we offer our Mechanical Aptitude Test, which was developed in consultation with industry experts to assess the understanding of basic mechanical principles, along with the applications of those principles to everyday shop situations. This test is appropriate for candidates who will work in a technical setting on and

around manufacturing equipment.

Our Workforce Development Team is working to build a resource library that will host information on activities, programs and initiatives that are creating awareness of manufacturing careers as well as building talent pipelines. There will be contact information for someone knowledgeable about the program who is willing to answer questions and provide guidance should a member or chapter want to consider starting a similar program in their area.

STRENGTHENING BRAND & CREDIBILITY

Membership in a well-recognized association such as NTMA can enhance credibility and position a company as a thought leader. Being part of an association builds trust among customers, partners and investors.



Utilize NTMA as an essential partner in your company's ecosystem.

STRENGTHENING YOUR CORPORATE ECOSYSTEM FOR MANUFACTURING SUCCESS USING THE SIX GEARS OF GRATEGY

LISA RYAN, CERTIFIED SPEAKING PROFESSIONAL

Precision manufacturing isn't just about numbers and quality—it's about people. The best companies know strong relationships drive long-term success. Employees, suppliers, customers, industry partners — every connection matters. No business thrives in a vacuum. Companies that stand out build a culture of value and trust. Lead with appreciation, and you'll boost engagement, strengthen collaboration and become the company everyone wants to work with.

The Six Gears of Grategy — Attitude, Appreciation, Access, Applause, Acts of Service and Accountability — form a strategic framework to help manufacturers create a strong culture that fosters these connections. When all six gears work together, companies experience higher employee retention, stronger customer loyalty and a more resilient business.

1. Attitude

THE MINDSET THAT SHAPES YOUR NETWORK

It all starts with attitude. In manufacturing, how leaders build relationships — inside and outside the company — determines whether they keep up or lead the way.

The workplace has changed — big time. Post-pandemic, employees expect flexibility and bring fresh ideas, tech skills and new ways of thinking. Are you paying attention? The best leaders embrace change, recognize innovation and create a workplace where employees feel valued because sometimes, the least experienced person has the game-changing insight you need.

2. Appreciation

A LEADERSHIP HABIT THAT STRENGTHENS CONNECTIONS

Manufacturing leaders juggle a lot, and in the rush to meet deadlines, it's easy to focus on what's wrong rather than what's working. That's why practicing appreciation is so important.

Taking just a moment each day to recognize the positives — a hardworking employee, a reliable supplier, a loyal customer — can shift your mindset. Leaders who focus on gratitude bring more energy, positivity and resilience to their teams, which in turn strengthens the entire corporate ecosystem.

3. Access

REMOVING BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Employees do their best work when they have the right training, leadership and tools. The same goes for your business partners — how easy is it for customers to work with you? Do suppliers feel like true partners or just vendors?

In a thriving corporate ecosystem, information flows freely, mentorship is encouraged and companies actively break down silos that slow down innovation and efficiency.

4. Applause

RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING WINS

While Appreciation is about a personal practice of gratitude, Applause is about making sure others feel valued and recognized. Employees, suppliers and customers all thrive on acknowledgment.

Recognition doesn't have to be complicated:

- A shoutout in a team meeting for someone who went the extra mile.
- A quick thank-you call to a supplier who delivered in a crunch.
- A social media post highlighting a long-standing customer partnership.

When people feel valued, they become more invested in the relationship — and that strengthens every part of your corporate ecosystem.

5. Acts of Service

GOING BEYOND THE TRANSACTION

The best manufacturing companies do more than produce parts, they solve problems, provide expertise and support their teams.

An Acts of Service mindset means going beyond the transaction. It's about making sure employees know their work matters, customers feel heard and vendors see you as a trusted partner — not just another order number. When companies consistently serve others, their reputation, loyalty and opportunities grow.

6. Accountability

THE FOUNDATION OF TRUST

Trust holds a corporate ecosystem together. If employees don't trust leadership, if customers don't believe you'll deliver, or if suppliers can't rely on your word, everything falls apart.

Accountability means doing what you say you'll do — meeting deadlines, following through on commitments and making tough but fair decisions. The most respected companies in manufacturing operate with integrity and transparency, and that's what keeps their business relationships strong.

A STRONGER ECOSYSTEM, A STRONGER BUSINESS

NTMA members know that precision, reliability and collaboration drive manufacturing success. But beyond technical expertise, it's the people and relationships that make the biggest impact.

By focusing on the Six Gears of Grategy, manufacturers can build workplaces where employees stay, customers trust them and partners want to collaborate. The stronger your ecosystem, the more resilient your business becomes.

So ask yourself:

Would you rather compete for every opportunity or become the company that employees, customers and suppliers actively seek out?

The answer lies in how well you cultivate your corporate ecosystem.

Lisa Ryan, CSP, is a keynote speaker, author, and workplace culture expert who helps manufacturing leaders create engaged, loyal teams through gratitude-driven strategies. Learn more at LisaRyanSpeaks.com



ULTRA-TECH AEROSPACE: LEADING THE CHARGE FOR A STRONGER KANSAS CITY MANUFACTURING COMMUNITY

FRED STIPKOVITS, PRESIDENT, ULTRA-TECH AEROSPACE

In the ever-evolving landscape of manufacturing, collaboration is the key to sustainable growth. Ultra-Tech Aerospace has long recognized the power of unity in an industry often characterized by fierce competition. As an active leader in the Kansas City Chapter of the National Tooling and Machining Association, Ultra-Tech Aerospace is dedicated to building a cohesive business ecosystem that fosters innovation, mutual support and shared success.

STRENGTH IN UNITY

Ultra-Tech Aerospace believes that manufacturers in the Kansas City region, and beyond, are stronger together. By working collaboratively rather than in isolation, businesses can leverage each other's strengths, share best practices and create opportunities for growth that benefit the entire sector. Through NTMA, Ultra-Tech Aerospace and other member companies are breaking down competitive barriers and fostering an environment of camaraderie and cooperation. But this effort doesn't come easy; it takes trust and respect to break down those barriers.

ACTIVE LEADERSHIP IN NTMA

The leadership of Ultra-Tech Aerospace plays a vital role in shaping the direction of the Kansas City NTMA chapter. With a commitment to industry advancement, the company's leaders actively participate in networking events, knowledge-sharing initiatives and advocacy efforts that support the local manufacturing landscape. Their vision aligns with NTMA's mission to provide manufacturers with the resources, education and connections needed to thrive in an increasingly competitive global market.

BUILDING A COHESIVE BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM

Ultra-Tech Aerospace and NTMA understand that a fragmented industry benefit no one. By fostering relationships between machine shops, aerospace manufacturers, tooling companies, fabricators and other key suppliers to the industry, the Kansas City NTMA chapter is working toward a more interconnected manufacturing community. This approach encourages businesses to pull on each other's strengths, address workforce challenges

collectively and drive innovation through collaboration.

NTMA NETWORKS, A FORCE MULTIPLIER

Ultra-Tech has embraced the power of partnerships to expand not only our own capabilities but also those of our peers in the industry. By collaborating with other manufacturers, we can take on projects that extend beyond our in-house capabilities, ensuring that complex jobs stay within our trusted network rather than being lost to outside markets. The growth of the KC NTMA has been instrumental in fostering these connections, allowing us to build relationships with reliable partners for outsourcing specialized work. This network has strengthened our ability to deliver comprehensive solutions to customers, reinforcing the idea that collaboration, rather than competition, drives the industry forward.

A great example of this in action is a recent project where Ultra-Tech was awarded a job that included precision laser and press break requirements — an operation beyond our internal capacity. Instead of turning the opportunity down, we leveraged our KC NTMA

partnerships to connect with a local fabrication shop that could meet the specifications. This not only allowed us to secure the business but also strengthened our relationship with a fellow manufacturer, creating a win-win scenario. Additionally, through our involvement in NTMA-led knowledge-sharing initiatives, we've implemented process improvements that have enhanced our efficiency and quality. These experiences highlight how membership in the NTMA isn't just about networking — it's about real, tangible business growth through collaboration.

THE FUTURE OF KANSAS CITY MANUFACTURING

As the incoming board president of the Kansas City NTMA, Ultra-Tech Aerospace's leadership is dedicated to taking this vision to new heights. Working hand-in-hand with Executive Director Katherine O'Toole, and board members, the company is committed to growing the region's manufacturing market share, strengthening partnerships and championing initiatives that support industry-wide success.

By working together, Kansas City manufacturers can build a thriving, resilient industry that competes on a national and global scale —not against each other. Through shared expertise, joint problem-solving and a spirit of unity, the manufacturing community in Kansas City is proving that success is not a zero-sum game. The Kansas City NTMA has also partnered with other industry associations such as the Missouri Association of Manufacturers, Missouri Enterprise Solutions and the St. Louis Chapter of the NTMA to cast our net wider across state lines and strength the message of collaboration. A joint chapter summit in late April brought all of the parties together in Kansas City to network and learn the strengths each member possesses so we can grow together.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Ultra-Tech Aerospace invites fellow manufacturers to join NTMA and be part of a movement that prioritizes collaboration over competition. Together, we can strengthen Kansas City's position as a leader in



manufacturing excellence, ensuring a prosperous future for businesses, employees and the industry.

In manufacturing, as in life, we are stronger together.

**"THIS APPROACH ENCOURAGES
BUSINESSES TO PULL ON
EACH OTHER'S STRENGTHS,
ADDRESS WORKFORCE
CHALLENGES COLLECTIVELY AND
DRIVE INNOVATION THROUGH
COLLABORATION."**

CHAPTER CHECK-IN

BLUE COLLAR BASH WITH THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER

BETTY VRCEK, CHAPTER EXECUTIVE, ROCKY MOUNTAIN TOOLING & MACHINING ASSOCIATION

Colorado Manufacturers came together for an amazing experience last Friday for our Blue Collar Bash. The day started with free gun rentals during an Open Shoot at the The Gallery Sportsman's Club & Range before 54 people competed in a shooting contest. Then other Bash attendees joined

us and we ended the evening with a casino night! Many manufacturers brought their employees as a "Company Outing." We are so grateful to be able to serve local manufacturers in such a well-rounded way.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR CONTEST WINNERS:

1st Place - Julian Hernandez of Hexagon Machine & MFG
2nd Place - Noah Bryant of Blueprint Advanced Manufacturing
3rd Place - Matt Adney of Blueprint Advanced Manufacturing



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NORTHERN UTAH MACHINING CONTEST WRAP-UP: A HEARTFELT THANK YOU!

KAITY VAN AMERSFORT, CHAPTER EXECUTIVE, NORTHERN UTAH NTMA

The recent Northern Utah Machining Contest, held on March 21 and March 28, was a resounding success. We are thrilled to extend our heartfelt congratulations and thanks to everyone who participated!

This event brought together aspiring machinists, seasoned professionals, educators and industry enthusiasts, showcasing extraordinary talent and dedication. Our competitors exhibited remarkable skills that truly embodied the spirit of craftsmanship and innovation.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to our partners, supporters and the many volunteers who generously donated their time and resources. Your commitment and hard work made this event possible, and we could not have done it without you.

this event possible: Skills USA, MSC Industrial Supply, Centric Precision Machining, Paramount Machine, Skydandee Manufacturing, Silencer Co, Davis Technical College and Mountainland Technical College.

Thank you once again for making the Northern Utah Machining Contest a memorable experience for all!

**For more information, please contact: Kaity Van Amersfort, Chapter Executive, Northern Utah NTMA, chapterexec@nuntma.org, 626-510-4085



A special thank you goes out to all the students who took the time to participate. Your enthusiasm for learning and passion for machining inspires us all and underscores the importance of fostering the next generation of skilled professionals.

Together, we have created an amazing platform for learning, collaboration and celebration of the machining industry. We look forward to more events like this in the future, where talent meets opportunity.

A special thank you to the following companies who made



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PT SOLUTIONS: POWERING PROGRESS FOR NTMA MEMBERS THROUGH LOCAL SUPPORT

MATT KYLE, CORPORATE MARKETING MANAGER, PTSOLUTIONS



Imagine a world where your manufacturing shop doesn't have to face tooling inefficiencies, supply chain uncertainty or generic customer service. Instead, you're backed by a partner that not only understands the unique challenges of precision machining—but is also around the corner, ready to solve them.

Welcome to the world of PTSolutions—your local manufacturing ally.

For decades, PTSolutions has been more than a tooling supplier. We're the hands-on partner helping NTMA members transform their shop floors into streamlined, high-output operations. Our value goes far beyond product catalogs. We bring a rare combination of nationwide buying power and deeply rooted, local presence to every relationship.

Here's our promise:

When you partner with PTSolutions, you don't just get parts—you get a dedicated team who knows your name, understands your industry and cares about your goals. Our representatives are on the ground in your area, ready to walk your shop floor, identify gaps and implement real-time solutions that impact your bottom line.

Our difference? Proof in every partnership.

NTMA members nationwide have unlocked new efficiencies through our support. From customized

vending solutions that reduce downtime, to technical training that empowers your team, PTSolutions is the force multiplier your operation has been waiting for. And with 40+ branch locations across the country, help is never far away.

We've also invested in a team of over 300 technical experts—engineers, machinists and problem-solvers—who don't just sell tools. They provide insights, strategies and on-site consultations that elevate your performance.

It's time to push forward — together.

As an NTMA member, you now

have exclusive access to a toolkit that fuels innovation while keeping the human touch of local service. Whether it's helping you lower total cost of ownership, improve tooling accuracy or navigate the latest in manufacturing tech—PTSolutions is your bridge from complexity to confidence.

Join the NTMA manufacturers who already trust us—and discover what it means to have a partner who's all in.

Visit pts-tools.com/ntma-member-benefits to learn more and connect with your local rep today.



alliant:

HELPING MEMBERS MAXIMIZE CREDITS AND INCENTIVES

McKENZIE FINDLEY, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, ALLIANT

At alliant, we're deeply proud of our relationship with the National Tooling & Machining Association (NTMA) as the Exclusive Provider of Credits and Incentives, and the manufacturing industry as a whole. Few sectors are as critical in making our country the worldwide leader it is today, both as a trailblazing force for ingenuity and contributor to our broader economy.

When the R&D credit became a permanent part of the tax code in the '80s, it helped America's innovators further cement their place as a global force. Since 2001, alliant has helped clients in nearly every sector take advantage of these credits and incentives, giving them the ability to reinvest and continue their growth. Today, manufacturers continue to be one of our strongest industry partners. We've brought immense value to them as well, with over \$60M brought to NTMA members alone.

As economic uncertainty abounds, this legacy tax credit could help manufacturers weather the storm, and alliant is ready to help. Though tariffs have already been implemented (and un-implemented) just in the past few weeks, many firms are unsure of how to prepare for such an increasingly volatile future. We already know, for example, that certain tariff implications will be extensive, even devastating, for many industries. While the outlook continues to be in flux, manufacturers will be affected and must have a plan for their company's future.

Fortunately, the Research and Development Tax Credit can help bridge this gap and provide the capital needed to

remain not only afloat, but competitive. More excitingly, this decades-old incentive will have new life breathed into it, as Congress is poised to return R&D expensing to its prior, more powerful form. The current administration is also poised to offer manufacturers full "bonus" expensing of machinery and equipment, rather than forcing them to amortize the expense over five years.

Just recently, alliant helped a custom tubing manufacturer secure almost half a million dollars in federal and state refunds for their day-to-day work. Their qualified activities included the development of manufacturing tools and dies, design development, prototyping and testing using computer-aided design tools. These activities may seem perfunctory for a manufacturer, but they brought the client extensive, significant savings. Not only that, but these credits and incentives will be available in perpetuity, allowing for continued savings for years to come. These examples of high six-figure savings are not altogether uncommon and can make all the difference for those looking to grow, reinvest or simply navigate this complex era with more peace of mind.

These changes can be difficult to keep up with, but they cannot be ignored, especially for those most likely to benefit. That's precisely where alliant can help. For 20 years, we've been helping companies transform and thrive in the face of change.



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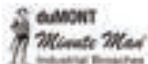
The **Mini Motorized Slotter**, adapted for Tsugami Models, can handle external and internal keyway and spline profiles with cycle times **5-10x faster** than all CNC Broaching Tools. The 6-sided Ram design offers maximum torsional rigidity for a superior tool finish while being easy to maintain.

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BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY: BOSTON CHAPTER'S GET TOGETHER

SALLY MONROE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BOSTON TOOLING & MACHINING ASSOCIATION

The Boston Chapter recently hosted an inspiring event aimed at bridging the gap between education and the manufacturing industry. Students from both the day program and adult night-time machining program at Greater Lawrence Vocational Center were warmly invited to join the members of United Tool & Machine, located in Lawrence, Massachusetts. The purpose of this gathering: to tour the facility, meet industry professionals, learn about real-world applications and develop valuable networking skills.

Why host such an event, you might ask? For many of us, our journey into the manufacturing field started through family businesses, breaking into the industry or even stumbling upon the opportunity by chance. This event offered students a unique chance to step into this world intentionally — to explore, ask questions and learn how to interact with business leaders.

Invitations were sent to the school and administrators shared them with the students. The response was

remarkable — 15 enthusiastic students accompanied by two eager instructors, took the initiative to attend. All the students arrived independently, on time and ready to immerse themselves in the experience. The excitement and anticipation were palpable, though initially sprinkled with the expected nervous glances and hesitant interactions. Who among us can't recall that awkwardness from our early professional days?

The event began with a warm welcome and an insightful presentation about United Tool & Machine. Then came the highlight — touring the manufacturing floor. For many students, this was their first glimpse of a bustling manufacturing operation. The diversity of the processes, machines and products sparked awe and curiosity. Each section was introduced with explanations about the machinery, its operations and examples of the products being crafted. The students marveled at the organized, dynamic environment, asking thoughtful questions and soaking in the



experience. Before they knew it, they had spent an hour exploring the facility — astonished at the size and complexity of the operation.

During the concluding Q&A session, one brave student asked the pivotal question: "Are you hiring?" The host, Scott Fallavollita, responded, "YES." This sparked a wave of excitement as students hurried to retrieve their resumes from bags or cars. Applications were handed out — a testament to the event's success in inspiring the next generation of professionals.

The chapter's executive director has been invited to visit the vocational programs soon to continue fostering these connections. The hope is that this partnership will grow, spreading awareness of the fantastic career opportunities available — from the front office to the manufacturing floor.

This event marked an important stepping stone in building success for both industry members and students. It opened doors to a deeper understanding of future career paths while nurturing relationships that will shape the future of the manufacturing workforce.



NTMA SAYS GOODBYE TO LONG-TIME LEADER AND FRIEND

SHELLI McINTOSH, CHAPTER EXECUTIVE, ST. LOUIS NTMA

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of longtime NTMA member and dear friend, William "Bill" Bachman Jr.

Bill was a pillar of the NTMA, both regionally and nationally. Over the years he generously gave his time, leadership and heart to our mission. On the chapter level, Bill served faithfully in many roles — including president, vice president, trustee and board member — always bringing wisdom, passion and a deep commitment to the precision machining industry.

The Bachman family impact extends far beyond the St. Louis Chapter. Bachman Machine was one of the founding members of the National Tooling and Machining Association, helping to shape and strengthen the organization into what it is today. The Bachman legacy is woven into the very fabric of the NTMA, and we are forever grateful.

Bill will be remembered not only for his professional accomplishments, but for his kindness, integrity and dedication to the people around him. The impact of his service and leadership will continue to inspire us all.

Please join us in keeping Bill's family, friends and colleagues in your thoughts during this difficult time.



It was a privilege to recognize and honor Bill at the St. Louis NTMA Annual Chapter Meeting in December.

Member News NTMA

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CELEBRATING 80 YEARS OF PRECISION: STARN TOOL & MANUFACTURING COMPANY'S LEGACY AND VISION FOR THE FUTURE

BILL STARN, CEO, STARN TOOL & MFG. CO.

This year marks a monumental milestone for Starn Tool & Manufacturing Company — 80 years of innovation, craftsmanship and dedication to excellence. Founded in 1945, Starn Tool began as a small machine shop with a mission to deliver high-quality manufacturing solutions. Today, it is a trusted industry leader, known for its precision tooling, advanced manufacturing processes and unwavering commitment to customer success.

A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

Over the past eight decades, Starn Tool has grown from a family-owned business into a dynamic organization that serves industries ranging from aerospace and automotive to medical and energy.

Known for its ability to tackle complex challenges, the company has built a reputation for producing highly customized solutions that meet the most demanding specifications.

KEY MILESTONES IN THE COMPANY'S HISTORY INCLUDE:

- Expanding its capabilities to include 5-axis CNC machining
- Earning certifications and accolades for quality and excellence, and soon to be receiving a new certification so we can enhance our expertise through advanced quality accreditation.

- Building strong, long-standing relationships with customers across the U.S. and beyond.

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

As we celebrate this remarkable anniversary, Starn Tool remains focused on the future. The company's vision is driven by three core principles:

Innovation: By leveraging cutting-edge technologies, including automation, robotics and digital manufacturing, Starn Tool is committed to staying at the forefront of the industry.

This forward-thinking approach ensures that customers benefit from solutions that are not only precise but also efficient and cost-effective.

Workforce Development:

Recognizing that people are the foundation of success, Starn Tool invests heavily in its workforce. Through training programs, mentorship and a focus

on employee well-being, the company continues to nurture the next generation of skilled manufacturers.

Community Impact:

Rooted in its family-owned values, Starn Tool is dedicated to giving back to the community. From supporting local initiatives to volunteering for local nonprofits, the company aims to create a positive impact that extends far beyond the shop floor.

HONORING THE PAST, BUILDING THE FUTURE

As Starn Tool & Manufacturing Company reflects on its 80-year history, it remains proud of its heritage and excited for what lies ahead. The company's success is a testament to the hard work, ingenuity and dedication of its employees, past and present.

With a steadfast commitment to quality, innovation and integrity, Starn Tool is poised to shape the future

of manufacturing while honoring the legacy that brought it here. Here's to 80 years of precision and progress—and to many more to come!

Several events are planned throughout the year, including a monthly donation of \$800 to a local charity chosen by our employees. In June, a NWPA NTMA shop tour is planned followed by an anniversary party at Starn Tool & Mfg.



Visit www.starn.com to follow the 80th-anniversary events and accomplishments.



Member News

NTMA



NTMA 6S Excellence Award

PURPOSE:

To improve the perception of American manufacturing by promoting and recognizing excellence in member shop organization and efficiency.

HOW IT WORKS:

NTMA companies apply for the award by submitting a self-assessment based on criteria that demonstrate best-in-class practice in the six S's:

- 1. Safety | 2. Sort | 3. Set in Order**
4. Shine | 5. Standardize | 6. Sustain

Certificates are awarded every year for the first five years based on self-assessments submitted. Once the recipients receive five certificates, they are also presented with a trophy.

SUBMISSIONS:

For an application and forms, please contact Linda Warner at lwerner@ntma.org or 216-264-2824.

Please submit your application by Friday, September 5th, 2025 to be considered.

Completed applications should be sent to 6Saward@ntma.org



NTMA SERVICE AWARDS 2025 NOW ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS

The Service Awards are given out each year at the Manufacturing Engage Conference.
We need your help finding the best candidates for these awards.

Award categories are:

MEMBER AWARDS

HONOR AWARD

For continuing meritorious service and dedication to the Industry and/or Association by an NTMA Regular Member. Traditionally rendered for longevity of service and/or dedication, as opposed to a single act of service in a short-time Industry or Association position.

L.A. SOMMER MEMORIAL AWARD

For outstanding and continuing service of the highest magnitude by an NTMA Regular Member. Emphasis is placed on service to the Association, both of the highest order over a period of time, demonstrating excellence in a particular role in NTMA, rather than as a participant in a single event.

WILLIAM E. HARDMAN AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TRAINING

For a company or individual of Regular, National Associate, or Education member status of NTMA that has consistently demonstrated strong support and active participation in "structured training" for the precision custom manufacturing industry.

NON-MEMBER AWARD DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

For outstanding service to the Industry and/or Association by a Non-NTMA Regular Member Company Representative.

ELIGIBILITY RULES & REQUIREMENTS

1. If honoree has previously received the LA Sommer Award, he/she is not eligible to receive the Honor Award or William E. Hardman Award.
2. If honoree has previously received the Honor Award and/or the William E. Hardman Award, he/she is eligible to receive the LA Sommer Award.
3. All Award nominees must be currently active in their company and/or industry, or active in the Association as a Past Service Member.
4. If no candidates are nominated for any of these awards, the particular award in question will not be presented in that given year.
5. Nominators cannot nominate the same person for multiple awards, but can nominate multiple persons for multiple awards.

Help us recognize deserving individuals and/or companies that have supported and advanced the industry and the Association.

Submit your nomination(s) by Friday, August 8th, 2025.
For a nomination form, contact Linda Warner at lwerner@ntma.org

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