

Job Connection

Top Manufacturing Groups and Events for Managers

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There are endless options when it comes to choosing a suitable activity, association, event, or group associated with manufacturing. Industry Week lists **thirty-one associations** focused on the industry. Wikipedia provides a similar list under **industry trade groups** that numbers fifty-nine. Then, there is the Directory of Manufacturing Associations showing more than 350 manufacturing organizations, sortable even further by thirty-six specific industry categories. **Guidestar**, the world's largest source of information on nonprofit organizations, returns 2,445 results when searching for the term "manufacturing." Lastly, **LinkedIn** reveals 7,077 groups when one enters "manufacturing" as the search term.

You might sum all this up by saying "information overload." With all this data at one's disposal, choosing the most appropriate activity, association, event, or group is no small undertaking. Even the most experienced working professional will find the selection process a little overwhelming. Ultimately, making the correct decision revolves around these factors:

- The specific product your company manufactures. Examples include adhesives and sealants, fabricated pipes, glass, paper, plastics, or steel.
- The sector your company most aligns with, such as Aircraft, Air Conditioning, Paper and Pulp, or Oil/Gas Machinery.
- Geographical considerations based around what's nearby or where the target market does business.

By focusing on these, your decision becomes much more clear. Even by pinpointing what is best for you and your organization, several national level groups and events may be of value and worthy of consideration. For this, we have done some homework for you and assembled the best of the best.

Top National Level Associations and Groups

Top manufacturing groups found on LinkedIn, as of 9/2017:

1. **American Welding Society (AWS)**, **24,334 followers**. AWS was founded in 1919, as a nonprofit organization with a global mission to advance the science, technology, and application of welding and allied joining and cutting processes, including brazing, soldering, and thermal spraying.
2. **SME**, **10,941 followers**. SME promotes advanced manufacturing technology and develops a skilled workforce. Its purpose is to advance the industry and attract future generations.
3. **National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)**, **6,785 followers**. NAM is the largest manufacturing association in the United States, representing small and large manufacturers in every industrial sector and in all 50 states.
4. **Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI)**, **3,129 followers**. ISRI members are manufacturers and processors, brokers and industrial consumers of scrap commodities, including ferrous and nonferrous metals, paper, electronics, rubber, plastics, glass, and textiles.
5. **Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM)**, **2,388 followers**. AEM is a trade association that provides services on a global basis for companies that manufacture equipment, products and services used worldwide in the following industries: Agriculture, Construction, Forestry, Mining, and Utility.
6. **American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI)**, **2,090 followers**. AISI serves as the voice of the North American steel industry in the public policy arena and advances the case for steel in the marketplace as the preferred material of choice.
7. **Association for Manufacturing Excellence (AME)**, **2007 followers**. AME is the premier organization for the exchange of knowledge in enterprise excellence.
8. **The Association for Manufacturing Technology (AMT)**, **1,902 followers**. AMT represents and promotes U.S.-based builders and distributors of manufacturing technology; the high-tech machinery, devices, and digital products that enable advanced manufacturing.
9. **National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA)**, **1,824 followers**. NMMA is dedicated to advocating for and promoting the strength of marine manufacturing, the sales and service networks of its members, and the boating lifestyle.
10. **American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA)**, **1,698 followers**. AF&PA serves to advance a sustainable U.S. pulp, paper, packaging, and wood products manufacturing industry through fact-based public policy and marketplace advocacy.

Top National Level Events

EventsinAmerica.com highlights events and tradeshow across many industries.

Here is a quick hitting list of the national manufacturing events working professionals should consider:

1. **International Manufacturing Technology Show**, 114,000 attendees. Dubbed The Americas' Largest Manufacturing Show, the 2016 show hosted 2,407 exhibiting companies and 115,612 attendees. The key focus is on exploring metalworking industry product and productivity improvement including machine tools, controls, computers, software, systems and processes. The next show is September 10-15, 2018 in Chicago at McCormick Place. We will be there, so stop by and see us!
2. **NPE**, 65,000 attendees. If your company manufactures plastic materials, or uses them in the products you make, then quite simply, you need to be at NPE2018: The Plastics Show, May 7-11, 2018 in Orlando, FL.
3. **AHR Expo**, 65,000 attendees. The International Air-Conditioning, Heating, Refrigerating Exposition (AHR Expo), which started 86 years ago as a heating and ventilation show, has grown into the event of the year for the HVACR industry. The next event is January 22-24, 2018 in Chicago.
4. **The Offshore Technology Conference (OTC)**, 65,000 attendees. OTC is where energy professionals

meet to exchange ideas and opinions to advance scientific and technical knowledge for offshore resources and environmental matters. Manufacturing companies focused on Oil/Gas Field Machinery and Equipment will definitely be exhibiting. April 30-May 3, 2018 in Houston, TX.

5. **FABTECH Expo**, 50,000 attendees. Here you can meet suppliers, see their latest products, and find the tools you need to improve productivity. It focuses on metal forming, fabricating, welding, and finishing. This year's conference also addresses rapidly growing 3D/additive manufacturing. Held November 6-9, 2017 in Chicago. We'll be at this show. Stop by booth B25107.
6. **Promat Show**, 45,000 attendees. ProMat is the material handling and logistics industry's premier global event. It's where 45,000 manufacturing and supply chain buyers from 115 countries come to see what's new. The next event is scheduled for April 8-11, 2019 in Chicago.

Geographical Considerations

For those interested in attending events close to home, regional events are of primary importance: **WESTEC**, **SOUTH-TEC**, **HOUSTEX**, **EASTEC**, and **FABTEC Canada**.

We encourage you to explore the directories we have cited above for finding the groups, associations, and events that perfectly match your organization. You may even want to consider specific seminars and webinars throughout the year, helping you keep pace with rapidly advancing manufacturing technology.

Previously featured on MCR Safety's end user blog.

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