



IMTS

IMTS 2018: This Year's Show Promises the Latest in Machining and Metalworking

Don Sears | Jul 30, 2018

IMTS 2018 kicks off on Sept. 10 and runs through Sept. 15. Read why industry decision-makers attend year in and year out—and get a better sense of the pavilions and conference sessions to attend. Also, learn why you need a plan and strategy for seeing exhibitions and booths of all sizes.

The *International Manufacturing Technology Show* in Chicago may only happen every two years, but its importance for exposing companies of all sizes to new machining, new tooling options and best practices in productivity cannot be understated. Since 1927, the show has been an important bellwether of industrial innovation. It is the largest manufacturing show in America, averaging over 100,000 visitors from more than 110 countries—and over 1.3 million square feet of show floor.

At the last IMTS in 2016, 115,612 industry attendees experienced over 2,400 company exhibitions, demonstrations and conference sessions. IMTS is a great way to see many unique manufacturing technologies and techniques on display over a few days in one central location. It's also about making new business contacts and discovering the best manufacturing practices in your industry segment.

Find out must-know Chicago info before you go. We share details about transportation, the convention center, sightseeing, dining and more. Read "IMTS 2018: Things to Know Before You Go" to learn more.

Are you a *job shop* looking to expand into aerospace? Looking to retool your shop with the latest in carbide cutters or want new ways to recycle or reuse your metalworking fluids? Ready to network your machines and collect production metrics in new ways? All of this and much more will happen at IMTS 2018.

MSC at IMTS 2018: Booth 2094

Where dreamers and doers connect—that’s the theme of IMTS 2018. There will be opportunities to network with experts on topics across the metalworking and manufacturing landscape—and to learn about new tools and techniques.

“I love to see new ideas,” says Mark Tario, an engineering and safety manager at Accurate Gauge, *in an interview* with AMT. “What are the things that the dreamers have dreamed up that the doers have said, ‘We can use that.’ I want ideas that I can use, or ready solutions we can implement ... You may come out of IMTS with something completely different from what you expected, but it’ll solve your challenge.”

We’ll share those stories here before and during the show, so visit often.

MSC will be showcasing the “Cross Section of Technology & Human Expertise” at Booth 2094. Come by to connect and discuss how to improve metalworking productivity on your shop floor.

A gigantic show with thousands of vendors and a huge show floor to walk can be daunting. There is a lot of machining and tooling to see, many peers to swap shop stories with and new company representatives to meet. Yet, IMTS’ impact has more of a lasting effect than tired feet. According to *data The Association for Manufacturing Technology tracks*, 86 percent of attendees say they “are successful in finding specific products or solving manufacturing problems.” And overall, 95 percent say they are satisfied with exhibits they visit.

“The biggest challenge right now is just to stay on top of technological advances,” says Tom Hoban, an operations manager for the machine shop JTD Enterprises, *in an interview* with The Association For Manufacturing Technology, which runs the IMTS show. “Every two years things change so drastically, whether it is tooling or just general technology. It’s always worth the trip to see what’s new and exciting in this industry.”

The pace of change is a big reason to attend, say company leaders interviewed by AMT. But industry decision-makers also attend the show to connect with peers—and to learn how to use the advancements being made and to apply them in their shops. Remaining competitive means marrying reliable, predictable machining with customer expectations and needs—and having the right tools of productivity to win profitable bids.

“Every second has a cost on our machines, and every second could win or lose a quote if we don’t have the most efficient process possible,” says Molly Keene, co-owner of Tek Manufacturing, *in an interview* with AMT. “You can lose a job by a few pennies, because at 10,000 parts per order, those pennies add up.”



IMTS 2018

Keep tabs on everything IMTS. Bookmark our IMTS 2018 page right here.

What's On Tap for IMTS 2018? How Are the IMTS Pavilions Organized?

IMTS features nine industry pavilions, 20 major product groups and more than 350 product categories. AMT has organized the show to have industry focus in aerospace, automotive, machine shop, medical and power generation segments—as well as four other co-located areas in: *integrated automation, motion and drives, surface technology, compressed air and vacuum*, and *industrial supply*—which includes subcontracting, supply solutions and lightweight construction.

AMT has also organized the pavilions by *manufacturing area* and type. Here's a quick list in alphabetical order of 10 IMTS 2018 pavilions and their locations at *McCormick Place*:

Abrasive Machining, Sawing and Finishing

See all the grinders, saws and polishing equipment at: North Building, Level 3.

Additive Manufacturing

See the new powder and extrusion materials and layered processes that build them in action at: West Building, Level 3.

Controls and CAD-CAM

Technology is at the heart of machining in 2018—and that means software, simulation, sensors and all the “smart manufacturing,” the internet of things and *Industry 4.0* at: East Building, Level 2 and Level 3.

Electrical Discharge Machining (EDM)

See all the CNC wire EDM equipment and custom componentry at: East Building, Level 3.

Fabrication, Lasers

Here you'll find all the in-process monitoring, multifunctional beam capabilities, and water jet-based machining—as well as applications of plasma, heat-treating equipment and metal treating at: North Building, Level 3.

Gear Generation

From hobbers to broaching and shavers, see gear equipment and innovations in abrasive machining at: North Building, Level 3.

Machine Components, Cleaning, Environmental

You'll find mist collectors, purifiers, sumps and plant maintenance equipment, as well as materials handling and motion control equipment at: East Building, Level 2.

Metal Cutting

There is so much to see in this section, including CNC machining centers, turning centers, drilling, boring, milling and more—including a focus on interconnectivity of machines and metrics at: South Building, Level 3.

Quality Assurance

Metrology, gaging and tool monitoring matters. See it in action at: East Building, Level 3.

Tooling and Workholding Systems

See the new tools and systems designed to reduce setup times and help machines perform at peak levels—and see the innovations in metalworking fluids and coolants at: West Building, Level 3.

IMTS 2018: Conference Sessions

The IMTS Conference includes four “technical deep-dive” days of *roughly 70 sessions* from major tooling vendors and manufacturing specialists. Sessions vary from *dispelling metal additive myths* to *improving spindle time with the right workholding* to *advanced grinding in aerospace*. There is much to learn this year. **Registration** is required.

IMTS is also where *Modern Machine Shop* will announce and award its **“Top Shops” in manufacturing for 2018**—which is an excellent source of information about peers who are excelling in manufacturing operations and employee satisfaction. These awards go beyond picking a few elite companies, though: Detailed surveys help capture trends and isolate the successful characteristics of manufacturers that perform and profit.

What do these characteristics look like? Read “What Does It Take to Be a ‘Top Shop’ in Manufacturing?”

Be sure to plan ahead and get there early so you do not miss a beat. To help you and your team organize your time and days, it might make sense to use the **IMTS “MyShow Planner”** that AMT has provided.

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Molly Keene

Co-owner, Tek Manufacturing Inc.

Using Technology to Help Reduce the Impact of the Skills Gap

One way companies use IMTS to their advantage is to get their employees involved in finding new technologies that they believe will help their job—and help overall productivity metrics. The benefit? Employees feel more connected to the work itself—even if it means more automated processes.

“I tell them to look for something that’s going to improve their lives so they can work smarter, not harder,” **says** Rick Hoffman, CEO of EIMCo, in an interview with AMT. “Usually it’s some kind of automation, and they get excited about it. When they have that level of control and satisfaction, they are more likely to stay with us.”

Take note: Experienced IMTS attendees advise newbies to have a plan about what they want to see, but also to have a floor-walking strategy so they don’t miss anything of importance and talk to exhibitors of all sizes and in all parts of the show floor. Hoffman, for example, sends a busload of employees to IMTS, but only after having a strategy of what they can focus on seeing—and only after he has spent two days there on his own. He’s a big believer in making sure not to skip the smaller booths just because they’re not as flashy or large—so he always goes to the corners of every floor. This year, he and his team will be checking out robotic automation, optical scanners and automated gauging.

“I can check out a new technology and then walk a few feet to another booth and see what the competition is doing,” Hoffman tells AMT. “All that information is in one area where I can evaluate the

options side-by-side. Rather than flying across the country, I walk across an aisle. It saves us valuable time and money."

Are you attending IMTS? Do you have a plan for what you are going to see? Share your thoughts.

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