

Your IMTS Moment of Zen

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Don't let the largest U.S. manufacturing trade show intimidate. This is an opportunity to see firsthand how manufacturing/engineering applications are evolving in real time. Here are a few steps to make along the way:

We're No Longer Entering the Digital Domain, We're Fully Assimilated

The Controls & CAD-CAM Pavilion just outside the East Building at McCormick Place is always busy during IMTS week. I've affectionately called it the "Acronym Arena" in the past where software engineers discuss the advantages of ERP, OEE, RFQ, SPC, SOP, MES and KPIs.

Here, a 15-minute presentation can jump from cybersecurity to digital twin technology in less time than it takes for me to put cream in my coffee. If you don't believe this is the future of the manufacturing shop floor, I urge you to spend half a day in the Controls & CAD-CAM Pavilion collecting brochures.

This is the sabermetrics of machine tools. This is where a plant manager goes to discover that the three grinding cells, he/she has implemented in 2022 are currently 35 percent efficient. Salespeople can tell half-truths, but the data is right there in front of you on a spreadsheet and the numbers never lie. The industry has successfully integrated machine data so that everyone from design to production to distribution to the sales team has direct access to the same information.

We celebrate this new era of data-driven manufacturing where machine vision, augmented reality, control technology and simulation are becoming the norm. According to the IMTS team, companies like Mazak, Haas and Hurco are building machine libraries using *Autodesk*. Digital resources are being acquired to increase CNC and additive manufacturing productivity. Data solutions are creating productivity benefits in machines in mere weeks instead of months.

Join the Borg and plug-in this September during IMTS!

Your Next CEO?

The Smart Student Summit brings together students from elementary school through college, scout troops, robotics and STEM clubs, home-schooled students, and educators of all levels to explore the latest Industry 4.0 digital technologies driving manufacturing today.

Students can look forward to fun, interactive, and engaging exhibits from leading manufacturers demonstrating breakthrough technologies such as artificial intelligence,

augmented reality, virtual reality, generative design, digital twin, and more. Attendees will go beyond learning about manufacturing technologies to better understand how advanced machinery and software synchronize to build the equipment and infrastructure necessary for cutting-edge products and programs across industries. Who knows, your next boss could be the 14-year-old kid programming the robot in the corner of the exhibit hall.



The Conference to End All Conferences

The IMTS exhibition halls can draw in attendees like moths to the flame. They offer amazing visual machining demonstrations, virtual reality games, 3D-printing projects, and the occasional free bag of popcorn. It's hard not to feel like an engineer when you're perusing the halls even if you're simply there to write engineering stories.

You can certainly spend six days going booth to booth to better understand manufacturing technology in 2022, but don't forget to attend a conference or two during the week. IMTS boasts a comprehensive lineup of sessions on everything from IIoT and automation/robotics to artificial intelligence and material innovation. It's not hyperbole to suggest that most manufacturing sectors are represented in one form or another in the conference presentations.

Interested in solvents and chemistry? Check. System integration? Covered. Plant operations, grinding, metrology, supply chain, alternative processes? There's someone important in Chicago scheduled to discuss all these topics. Drop by a presentation or two every day to break up the chaos of the exhibition floor, your feet will thank you for it!

See you in September. 