

# AGMA PROMISES BIGGER, BETTER SHOW IN DETROIT

**Gear Tech talks with AGMA Executive Director Joe Franklin about plans for Gear Expo '93 and beyond.**  
Nancy Bartels

**A**AGMA's Gear Expo '93 is expected to be at least 10% larger in terms of floor space than the '91 show, according to Joe Franklin, AGMA's executive director. "As of June 1, we have 80 exhibitors registered", he says.

But size is not the only thing to be improved at Gear Expo '93. "We've worked very hard, not just to get a booth sold, but to put a rational floor plan together," says Franklin. "In the past, the arrangement was like a pyramid. At the entrance were a lot of very large booths, and then as you moved toward the back and the food service area, the booths got smaller.

"What we've done is to get very large booths all over the floor. The result is rather like a retail shopping center with anchor stores. We will still have some major booths in the front, but there will also be some fairly large presentations at the back near the food service area. I think this reflects the recognition that at a show like this there are really no bad spaces. Attendees are going to visit all the booths."

AGMA is trying some other floor plan innovations as well. Franklin explains: "We have gone to exhibitors — say a hobbing company, a grinding company, and a measurement company — and said, 'You guys sell together in the marketplace; you mutually reinforce one another's equipment. Why don't you think about taking three booths next to each other at the show?' And many exhibitors have been very responsive to that idea. What you'll be able to see is not just a good set of

equipment from one company, but a cross section of a whole system that can be installed. In a sense, we're trying to replicate the marketplace to some extent in a show environment."

AGMA has worked to improve the show in other respects as well. To help attendees make the most of their visit to Detroit, The Gear Manufacturing Symposium will be held concurrently with the show, and the Fall Technical Meeting will be linked to the Gear Expo as well. It is scheduled for October 14-15, the two days immediately after the show.

In addition, AGMA is attempting to schedule several international standards meetings for Detroit that same week in order to attract more overseas visitors to the show and the FTM. "We'd like to let the international visitors spend some time at the show and the FTM, and then go to their meetings. With airfares the way they are now, people usually try to stay for the whole week."

Arrangements also have been made with the Cobo Hall management to greatly upgrade the food service at the show. Says Franklin, "The problem is in Detroit, there just aren't a lot of restaurants near Cobo Hall. We would like people to be able to eat at the hall if they want to."

Even though the '93 Gear Expo is still in the planning stages, AGMA is already looking ahead to future shows. The 1995 show will be in Indianapolis. After that, the show will probably alternate between Detroit and other cities.

"Sometimes," says Franklin, "there are good problems to have. Our good problem is that the expo is no longer a very small show. It's not a gigantic show — you don't get lost in it, but it's too big for a lot of places that we'd like to hold it."

Franklin sees three other possible areas for future expansion of the show. "One trend we have to recognize and respect is the emergence of alternative materials. Right now most of our show is dedicated to steel or other metal gears, but I anticipate that in the 1995 show we will have pavilions for both plastic and powder metal gears," he says.

Another area of expanded interest is in research and development. "We know that people are doing research in the gear industry all the time. What we would like to do is encourage the universities and the third party research centers to come into a pavilion at Gear Expo and strut their stuff," says Franklin. "This would be a marvelous opportunity for these institutions to tell the engineering community what their capabilities are."

The final area of expansion AGMA is considering is in further development of the expo as a product show. "We have some gear companies already at the show," says Franklin, "but we haven't developed the show specifically for them. But I think many gear companies are sensing the growing willingness to outsource for supplies. Ultimately, we'd like Gear Expo to be one-stop shopping for people manufacturing and using gears." ■