

INDUSTRY SHOWS SHIFT EMPHASIS



A change has taken place within the industry that is going to have an enormous effect on the marketing, sales, and purchasing of gear manufacturing and related equipment. This change was the American Gear Manufacturers' Association, first biennial combination technical conference and machine tool mini-show. The conference combined the presentation of technical papers with displays of a variety of gear industry-related products. Although this first mini-show was small, and the timing right after the IMTS-86 was not the best, the enthusiasm and positive comments from the exhibitors and the attendees seem to promise a bright future for shows specifically for the gear industry. The AGMA conference in September was the

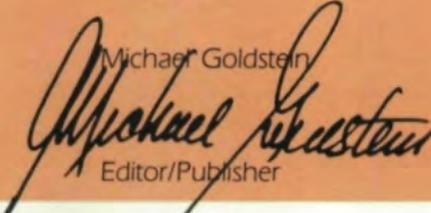
largest to date, with over 350 attendees. Future conferences, with an expanded exhibition, should far exceed these numbers.

AGMA is contemplating holding a show every two years to alternate with the IMTS. The planners of that show visualize much larger and more substantive displays. The next show is planned for the fall of 1987 at the 35,000 sq. ft. Cincinnati Convention Center in Cincinnati, Ohio.

I would hope that all future shows would be held in smaller cities, thus keeping costs down for both exhibitors and attendees. These lower costs would encourage companies to send more of their employees to both the exhibition and the technical sessions. The combining of these two functions would give maximum benefits in terms of information received for dollars expended.

The careful selection of time, city and exhibition space alone, however, will not maximize the potential benefits these shows and conferences could have for our industry. Our industry requires a continuing effort to achieve and maintain technical leadership and excellence in order to remain competitive. AGMA leadership must work with contributors and their companies to improve the quality of the technical papers presented. Presentations devoted exclusively to extolling company products or annual sales talks disguised as technical papers should be eliminated from the program. GEAR TECHNOLOGY has given extensive exposure to authors who have written articles about important technical concepts, new techniques or important research results. I would hope that the incentive of having such papers published, thereby gaining a wider audience, would raise the quality and shift the emphasis of future conference papers.

Providing an industry-wide forum for the sharing of research and ideas, as well as the opportunity to sell new products, is frequently a thankless and not particularly glamorous task. I think the foresight, hard work and commitment to technical excellence shown by the leadership of organizations like AGMA, SME, ASME, ASME—Gear Research Institute should be acknowledged. When we are able to look back on their contributions from the perspective of history, I think we will find that they were responsible for some of the most important changes in our industry.

Michael Goldstein

Editor/Publisher