

Honored and Impressed

At the AGMA annual meeting last month, the association presented me with its Distinguished Service Award. It was a great privilege and honor to be recognized in this way, most especially because I've found that my own ideals often mirror those of the association, whether by fostering education or by encouraging you to give back to the industry in a variety of ways. You can read some of my thoughts along these lines in my acceptance speech, which we've reprinted on page 78.

Now more than ever, I am thrilled to be affiliated with AGMA, as the association begins its hundred and first year and continues to reinvigorate and reinvent itself for the 21st Century. AGMA's new president, Matthew Croson, took over last year with a fresh vision and boundless energy. At the meeting, I witnessed the transition in leadership for AGMA's board of directors. And while the association will miss the enormous capability of outgoing Chairman Dean Burrows (president of Gear Motions), I believe the association will be in good hands under the guidance of incoming Chairman Jim Bregi, Jr. (president of Doppler Gear). As a third-generation gear manufacturer, Bregi will bring both a wealth of knowledge and experience as well as enthusiasm to his office.

AGMA is not the stodgy Old Boys Club one might expect from a manufacturing association more than a hundred years old. In fact, the ideas in some of the presentations at the annual meeting were progressive, modern and fresh.

For example, there were several presentations on the IoT (Internet of Things) and the importance and impact it will have on the manufacturing community. One of the presenters, Joel Neidig (director of R&D for ITAMCO), has been a leader in transforming his own company to start taking advantage of this new and important technology. I'm happy to report that Joel, in future issues, will be writing a column for us on IoT, which should give you some overview of the things going on and its importance to manufacturers everywhere. Joel will also be heading up a series of AGMA IoT workshops, where you'll be able to learn ways to implement this new technology in your own manufacturing environment.

One of the presenters remarked that you really need to start today understanding and implementing IoT in your factory as it will be important in one year, critical in two years and, in the presenter's opinion, if you haven't begun implementing this technology within three years, it may be too late. Many of you can remember the transformation from mechanical machines to NC machines, and then later to CNC machines, and how everything changed as a result. I have a feeling that the upcoming transformation might be even greater that we experienced with the advent of the computer.

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Publisher & Editor-in-Chief
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Another example of the insight available at the AGMA annual meeting was the presentation on the economy of the gear industry by Jim Meil of ACT Research. Jim has over three decades of experience, having recently retired as vice president and chief economist of Eaton Corporation, with prior experience at Chase Econometrics, and has been a regular presenter at the AGMA annual meetings. Not only does Jim have a great insight to the manufacturing community, but has a great sense of humor, for an economist. I'm happy to announce that in the near future, Jim will also be writing a regular column for us, giving all of us an economic insight to the manufacturing community.

I am a strong believer in the value of participating in your industry's association. This means more than paying dues or attending the yearly convention. But as I mentioned in my remarks at the award ceremony, being a member is only the first step. To get the real value, you need to get involved in committees and events, which shouldn't be viewed as an obligation, but rather an opportunity. There's no better way to guarantee your personal and professional continuing education. Your company gains credibility, along with extremely important strategic, business and marketing value. And on top of that, the industry as a whole benefits from your participation. Everybody wins.

And right now, AGMA seems to be on a roll. If you aren't already involved, or if you aren't involved much, there will never be a better time.

P.S. As an aside, those of you that haven't visited our website lately should be aware of the enormous breadth of knowledge that is available in the GT LIBRARY. I'm happy to report that we now are getting nearly 11,000 unique visitors to just that one feature on our website every month. Although we are starting on our 34th year of publishing this magazine, I feel that we are embarking on a whole new phase of our existence. I am as excited today about the information we're going to be bringing and our place in this industry as I was when I first started the magazine in 1984. We have been, and will continue to be, The Gear Industry's Information Source.