

Across the Country and On the Web, Members Help Members

How important is it to be able to talk to someone who is in the same sector of the industry you are in? Who has lived your experience and worked through the same challenges you are facing?

NTMA members believe the information you and your employees can glean from fellow member firms is invaluable to your business success. That is why NTMA conducts two national meetings a year.

Both the annual convention that is conducted early each year and the fall conference provide company owners plenty of opportunities to formally and informally exchange information with fellow company owners.

The national conventions and conferences feature formal roundtable discussions for members within particular industry sectors; Tools & Die, Precision Machining, Special Machines, Molds, and Grinding. In addition, there is ample opportunity for informal gathering and contact between conventions.

Also, NTMA's three networking programs were created to make it extremely easy for member companies and their employees to share information with fellow members so that everyone can increase their productivity and competitiveness.

- Plant Manager Networking Teams
- Next Generation Program for Family-Owned Businesses
- Online Forums available through the NTMA web site

Plant Manager Teams: Sharing Information Among Employees

NTMA Plant Manager Networking Teams enable plant managers, vice presidents and those in managerial positions to exchange information with their counterparts across the country. The program exposes participants to different management styles and philosophies, new technologies, production challenges, human resources issues and other issues that team members decide to pursue.

Key to the Plant Manager Networking Team program is that once each team is formed, the team sets its own agenda and pursues its own needs.

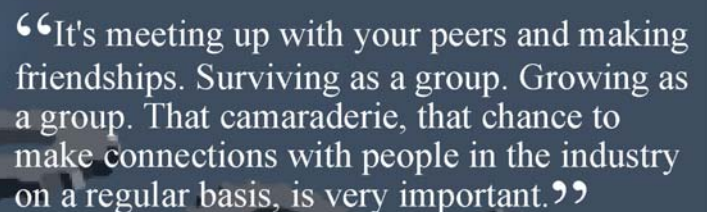
- Teams are formed at an organizational meeting each fall. Each team usually consists of six plant managers, each from a different part of the country. NTMA has seven Plant Manager Teams in any given year.
- In general, each team hosts at least six meetings a year, with meetings held at their respective members' plants so Plant Manager Team members can view firsthand different operations and examine different solutions.

Next Generation: So Younger Members Can Learn the Business

The Next Generation program is a series of seminars and roundtable discussions for the younger members of NTMA family-owned businesses who are planning to have a management role in their respective companies. The program enables the next generation of members to address family business issues from their perspective.

One seminar at each NTMA convention is devoted to Next Generation issues, though the seminars are open to all who attend the convention. Interaction with previous generation members is encouraged. Examples of some of the more recent seminar topics include:

- Creating and Nurturing the Corporate Culture
- Resolving Family Business Conflicts
- The Life Cycles of a Family Business
- The Role of Leadership



“It's meeting up with your peers and making friendships. Surviving as a group. Growing as a group. That camaraderie, that chance to make connections with people in the industry on a regular basis, is very important.”

– Michael Tamasi, President, AccuRounds

Networking & Information Exchange

Next Generation roundtable discussions are also conducted at each NTMA convention. The discussions are less formal than the seminars, but are geared to the needs and issues of NTMA's younger members. Some recent topics include:

- How to keep business discussions out of family gatherings.
- Dealing with siblings in the business who are not carrying their own weight.
- When daughters in the business are treated differently than sons.
- Dealing with the perceptions of non-family employees in the business.

Online Forums: Questions Asked and Answered on the Web

NTMA provides an online resource for members through NTMA's Online Forums available on the association's web site at www.ntma.org.

Within the Online Forum, members can ask questions or help fellow members solve problems through NTMA's chat room. It's a free service available to all NTMA members and helps them gather information from a variety of sources and members without having to contact individual members via telephone or personal visits.

Recent Online Forum topics have included:

- Amortization of ISO 9000 start up costs
- The pros and cons of lean manufacturing
- International business
- Internet marketing
- Employment opportunities
- Starting an ESOP plan