

To stay competitive you must stay informed

It pays to keep up with latest trends

Are you keeping up with industry developments? Can you tell me about the latest developments in: machine tools, people management and tooling?

Get any one of them wrong or at the very least fail to update and your productivity will slump.

To stay competitive you must stay informed. Read industry publications such as Industry Update Magazine, join networking associations and best of all, attend industry events.

Firstly: The machine tool. This would undoubtedly have to be the most critical investment of any organisation in the machining industry. But how do you go about finding out the best solution for your business? You can speak with the sales rep who has an obvious agenda to move machines or you can seek out more independent advice.

For example, in the last edition of Industry Update I discussed some of the machines on show at the recent National Manufacturing

Week exhibition in Sydney.

There was a huge range on display, including some brands I'd never heard of. Expos such as NMW provide a good forum to discuss the pros and cons of the latest machines with industry experts.

There you can find a solution that is right for your business.

Next: labour. Where do you find someone who is the right fit for your business? Both culture and technical ability is important when hiring. When you find the right employees, how do you retain them? How do you create a culture where your employees are driving change and keen to constantly improve the way they do things? There are initiatives in place such as Driving Productivity 2010 www.DrivingProductivity2010.com.au that could deliver answers to such questions.

For example, there is a one day workshop on Staff Management Strategies: Competitive

Advantage through Effective HR Alignment.

Lastly: tooling. Be smart when it comes to tooling. Many suppliers sell on price, but is it the right solution for you?

How often have you wasted production time testing inserts? Get it wrong and try another insert, and another insert, and another insert. How long has the door been open for now? Though carbide is relatively cheap, it can become very expensive when you calculate machine down time and labour.

Better to stay up to date and know your tools. Learn more by visiting industry events. Seco Tools, in conjunction with Challenge Engineering, are hosting the next Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME) event at their research and development centre at Huntingwood in Western Sydney.

The event will cover the basics of metal cutting and new strategies and techniques in material removal, like high speed and high feed milling,



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the advantages of high pressure coolant and the impact on tool life. For more information visit: www.challengecnc.com.au website.

I strongly encourage you to attend events and discover latest developments via networking.

Join an organisation that encourages productivity. A few that come to mind are the SME, The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) and the Australian Manufacturing Technology Institute Limited (AMTIL). Contact any of these organisations directly about membership.

Remember, you need to stay informed to stay competitive.

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