

AUSTECH 2013 : Manufacturers Pavilion speaker program launched

Key-note speakers from the CSIRO, DMTC, Advanced Manufacturing Council and many more

Melbourne, 07 February 2013 – AUSTECH 2013, Australia's premier advanced precision manufacturing and machine tool exhibition, co-hosted with National Manufacturing Week (NMW), will this year feature presentations from renowned industry experts in a new dedicated event zone. Speakers from industry, politics and science will discuss the possibilities of improving manufacturers' competitiveness through research, innovation and technology.

The organisers expect an audience of more than 10,000 to gather at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre from 7 to 10 May. About 87% of the attendees at AUSTECH are in middle or senior management positions. This group is an important audience segment, not just because of its size but also because these professionals play a key role in shaping the future of Australian manufacturing.

In order to better serve this key group, AUSTECH organiser AMTIL (Australian Manufacturing Institute Limited) launches the "Manufacturers Pavilion" at its 2013 edition in Melbourne. The Manufacturers Pavilion highlights the capabilities of Australia's precision engineering and advanced manufacturing industry and provides Australian component manufacturers, precision engineering firms, toolmakers, advanced manufacturers and general engineering companies the opportunity to exhibit their unique capabilities.

Supported by the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIISRTE) and sponsored by the Advanced Manufacturing Cooperative Research Centre (AMCRC), the Pavilion will be a focal point and provide a great forum for local manufacturers to put themselves in front of AUSTECH visitors, many of whom outsource and contract out their work.

For the first time this year, the Manufacturers Pavilion includes speeches and discussions with key industry people who give their time for free in order to impart their knowledge in this new dedicated event zone.

CSIRO's Dr Calum Drummond, Group Executive for Manufacturing, Materials and Minerals will present on CSIRO's capability and role in helping Australian manufacturers innovate in an increasingly competitive environment. He will discuss the importance of innovative thinking and collaboration, and how technology can be transformational for SMEs in Australia.

"This event is a major opportunity for CSIRO to further connect with industry, underline the increasing importance of technology and innovation, and to share some of the business successes we have helped to facilitate. I hope to provide a unique insight into our capability and give business owners a fresh perspective on the changing face of manufacturing and the opportunities available to them through precincts, clusters, networks and R&D to access innovative technologies and minds," Dr Drummond says.

More investment in intelligent manufacturing techniques and prioritising key technologies are crucial if Australia is to avoid losing its competitive edge in manufacturing, especially in the high-cost environment Australia's manufacturers operate in.

Göran Roos, Chairman of the Advanced Manufacturing Council in Adelaide and a member of the Economic Development Board and the Advisory Board of Invest in South Australia as well as of CSIRO's Manufacturing Sector Advisory Council, agrees and adds that manufacturing is the biggest spender of applied research and innovation with spillover effects into the rest of the economy.

He points out that manufacturing is changing due to technology changes and the provision of both service and manufacturing offerings from what once were pure manufacturing firms. "Australian firms have to change their world view as well as their behaviour if they are to become successful in a high-cost environment," he says. "The primary responsibility for this falls in the firm's management, but government also has a responsibility to both facilitate and enable these changes to take place."

In his speech, Mr Roos will provide the audience with a framework for working towards higher profitability in a high-cost environment. Australia is the third highest cost environment to operate in as a manufacturer after Norway and Switzerland, while around 2008 Australia was in the middle of the pack with an operating cost level just below the US.

Other key-note speakers include Dr Mark Hodge, CEO of the Defence Materials Technology Centre (DMTC) and Tony Quick, Chair of DMTC, who will present several case studies on manufacturing best practice with specific examples being drawn from the defence sector. DMTC's Chief Technology Officer, Dr Matt Dargusch will follow this discussion up with a more detailed presentation on the DMTC model and the manufacturing benchmarking activities DMTC facilitates.

AUSTECH is now open for registrations. Visitors are encouraged to register online (www.austechexpo.com.au) and avoid the last minute rush and queues during the event.

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