



A Few Words From New PMPA President – Jeff Ohlemacher

Jeff Ohlemacher was named the new president of PMPA at last month's Annual Meeting. The CEO of EMC Precision Machining in Elyria, Ohio has been actively involved with PMPA since 1978. In addition to being a director of the association and chair for the Northern Ohio Chapter, he has served on the following PMPA committees: Finance, Management Update, Strategic Planning, Statistical & Financial Resources, Quality, Technical Program and Executive. He most recently held the title of first vice president.

"Part of my role as first vice president was visiting the different PMPA chapters around the country," Mr. Ohlemacher says. "And part of that process was conducting a meeting called the President's Roundtable where I share a PowerPoint presentation that includes an overview and virtual tour of our company.

"Members invite me into their facilities to show me what they're doing," he continues. "So, in turn, I like to show them what EMC is all about. Earlier this year, President Barack Obama visited our company, so we incorporated that into the PowerPoint as well. That made the presentation even more interesting."

Commenting on his travels to the different PMPA shops, Mr. Ohlemacher says, "No matter where I go throughout the country, from New England to California, there is an openness among the members of PMPA. Whether it is at a roundtable or at somebody's shop, members

open their doors and share their ideas. It's really a great experience.

"Those who belong to PMPA are known for sharing information with fellow members, even when they might be competitors," he says. "When we walk into precision machining shops, the members *want* to show us what's going on there. They tell us what their needs are and we—PMPA executive director Mike Duffin and I—tell them what PMPA can do for them.

"Our typical member companies have three to five major customers," Mr. Ohlemacher points out. "They all seem to get into a niche. Some members are in different niches within the same industry, such as the medical field. They have similar processes, but tweak them to better serve their niches.

"They might show us a piece of equipment they've modified so that it does more," he explains. "Or, they improve it so that it does something beyond what the

equipment manufacturer would have thought of. We see a lot of that." Mr. Ohlemacher believes that PMPA members are a creative group. "These are people who figure out how to do things better," he says. "They use their creativity to improve their processes."

On the recession, Mr. Ohlemacher says, "In 2000, our industry set its sales level or measurement metric at 100. In October 2008, it peaked at 108 for a growth of 8 percent overall or 1 percent per year. Then the recession hit and we bottomed out at 63 in March 2009. We have since rebounded to 108 on that index, so we kind of look at it as a lost decade."

Still, Mr. Ohlemacher feels that the economic situation isn't all doom and gloom. "Everybody is in pretty good spirits. The general attitude among our members is, 'We're going to find a way to move forward.' It might involve cutting back in one area or trying something different in another. But the perseverance is there."

From his travels, Mr. Ohlemacher has seen first-hand how PMPA members have been handling the tough economic times. "I see them finding ways to ramp up production to whatever levels they need in order to satisfy their customers," he says. "They're doing it without adding employees, so people are working more hours to make things happen. There is also a lot of ingenuity and, of course, automation."

With the banks tightening credit, Mr. Ohlemacher feels that



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capital investment is a real challenge right now. "One of the solutions for our membership has been to find other companies within the association to partner with," he says. "Members are working with other PMPA shops to do some of the overflow work. They are using somebody else's capital that would otherwise be sitting idle.

"One member can use another member's equipment and help him out in the process," he continues. "Those are the things that companies have to do during tough times. And those kinds of relationships come from networking."

Mr. Ohlemacher is a big fan of the PMPA meetings. "I have attended more than 70 national meetings since I went to my first in 1978," he recalls. "I've served more than 10 years on the Technical Program Committee and have been promoting the Technical Conference for more than 30 years. You can't beat the quality of the programming at the Tech Conference, especially the roundtables that allow machinists to learn and to share their knowledge."

PMPA's new president has followed in his father's footsteps both at EMC and with his involvement in PMPA. "My dad was a founding member of the PMPA Management Update Committee and a past president of PMPA," he says. "The Management Update Conference continues to get great reviews on its content every year. That's because we pay attention to what members want, and then find a way to cater to that.

"I'm a big proponent of all the meetings," Mr. Ohlemacher continues. "Not only do attendees get an education, they get one-on-one face time with their fellow members. It all centers around the open exchange of thoughts and ideas. That just doesn't exist in every industry. In our association, the main benefit that members talk about is networking. It's part of PMPA's mission and vision: providing resources, information and networking opportunities that sustain and advance PMPA members."

Mr. Ohlemacher can be reached at 440-365-4171, ext. 110 or johlemacher@EMCprecision.com.

Why Join PMPA? Sustain!

Think of PMPA as an extension of your engineering and marketing departments. We help you focus on excellence and intelligently manage risk to sustain your success. We are also continually working to protect our industry by working to change government

regulations that are unfair or too restrictive. We help walk you through the steps required when an OSHA representative shows up at your door. And, we lobby on behalf of the industry to protect the interests of precision machined products manufacturers.

It is our goal to help you and other members calibrate your businesses so you can add value and compete globally. The tools we offer are designed to help you better understand your company's performance. That way, you can continue to not merely survive, but to thrive in today's competitive environment.

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Below is the calendar of upcoming conferences and events scheduled for the 2011 program year. For the latest district/chapter meeting information, please view the Calendar of Events at pmpa.org/calendar/. If you have questions about PMPA conferences or regional meetings, please contact Rob Kiener, Director of Government Affairs & Communications: 440-526-0300 or rkienner@pmpa.org.

PMPA Management Update Conference

February 24-27, 2011
Disney's Contemporary Resort
Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

PMPA National Technical Conference

April 17-19, 2011
The Greater Columbus
Convention Center
Columbus, Ohio

PMTS – Precision Machining Technology Show

April 19-21, 2011
The Greater Columbus
Convention Center
Columbus, Ohio



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