

Return to: [Previous Page](#)

MEP Association Launches Next Generation Manufacturing Study

2-10-09 7:00 AM EST

The American Small Manufacturers Coalition (ASMC) today launched a study to assess America's progress in adopting manufacturing strategies necessary to win in the global economy.

The Next Generation Manufacturing Study is the first step in a long-term effort by the coalition's members, Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Centers, to help American manufacturers weather today's recession and maintain manufacturing leadership in the next decade. MEP is a national program that helps small and midsize manufacturers implement competitiveness strategies.

The study, available to manufacturers across the nation at www.NGMStudy.com, is being spearheaded by MEP centers in 17 states including Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Jersey, New Hampshire, North and South Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas and Vermont. The study will supplement data collected in a Wisconsin pilot study conducted last fall. Collectively, these states are home to more than 150,000 manufacturers employing more than 5 million workers.

ASMC is conducting the study in conjunction with the recent expansion of MEP services in the areas of growth, supply chain development and green manufacturing.

Next Generation Manufacturing refers to a framework of six forward-looking strategies that are driving manufacturing growth and profitability in the 21st century, said Mike Klonsinski, ASMC board chair and executive director of the Wisconsin MEP. The strategies are customer-focused innovation, systemic continuous improvement, advanced talent management, global engagement, extended enterprise management and sustainable products and processes. The study includes a 61-question web-based survey that asks manufacturers to rank their progress on these key strategies.

"What is world-class today will be standard practice by 2015," said Klonsinski. "To succeed now and in the future, manufacturers need to make the transition to Next Generation Manufacturing."

Business leaders, manufacturers and industry experts say Next Generation Manufacturing represents a way forward for U.S. manufacturers.

"What we see here in the U.S. and around the globe is that the adoption of these strategies aligns with better business performance," said John Brandt, CEO of the Ohio-based Manufacturing Performance Institute (MPI), a global research firm that is conducting the study. Brandt said a recent Wisconsin study of more than 500 manufacturers confirmed the strong correlation between next generation strategies and readiness to compete globally.

"The regions of the world that have a higher number of firms implementing these strategies will compete and win on the world stage, which in turn will promote good jobs and stronger economies," said Drew Casani, director of the Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center

(TMAC). "We're confident those regions can be right here in the U.S. if we reach for better performance across all of the Next Generation Manufacturing performance benchmarks."

The study results will provide a wealth of valuable data for manufacturers, business leaders and state and national policymakers. Manufacturers can see how they rank against world-class performance benchmarks and target improvements where needed. Policymakers can strengthen and improve programs and services supporting manufacturers knowing where the critical needs are. "The study results will provide a scorecard, and the scorecard will tell us what we need to do to improve," Klonsinski said. For example, a low score on global engagement may indicate to policymakers actions are needed to help manufacturers sell into overseas markets, he said.

Study participants will receive a customized benchmarking report comparing their progress to the overall results. For more information on the study contact Carrie Hines of ASMC at carrie.hines@smallmanufacturers.org.

Noting the global recession and auto industry crisis, Klonsinski said, "If there were ever a time to be talking about transforming our manufacturing base, it is now."

About ASMC

The American Small Manufacturers Coalition (ASMC) is the national trade association of MEP Centers and partners. MEP is a national network of centers in 50 states and Puerto Rico focused on improving the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturers. These centers provide small and midsize manufacturers with public and private resources and services to promote growth, innovation and productivity. For more info visit www.smallmanufacturers.org.

American Small Manufacturers Coalition

Linda Abbott

608-826-6215

abbott@chorus.net

or

Carrie Hines

202-341-7066

carrie.hines@smallmanufacturers.org

Return to: [Previous Page](#)