

# MACH does the business

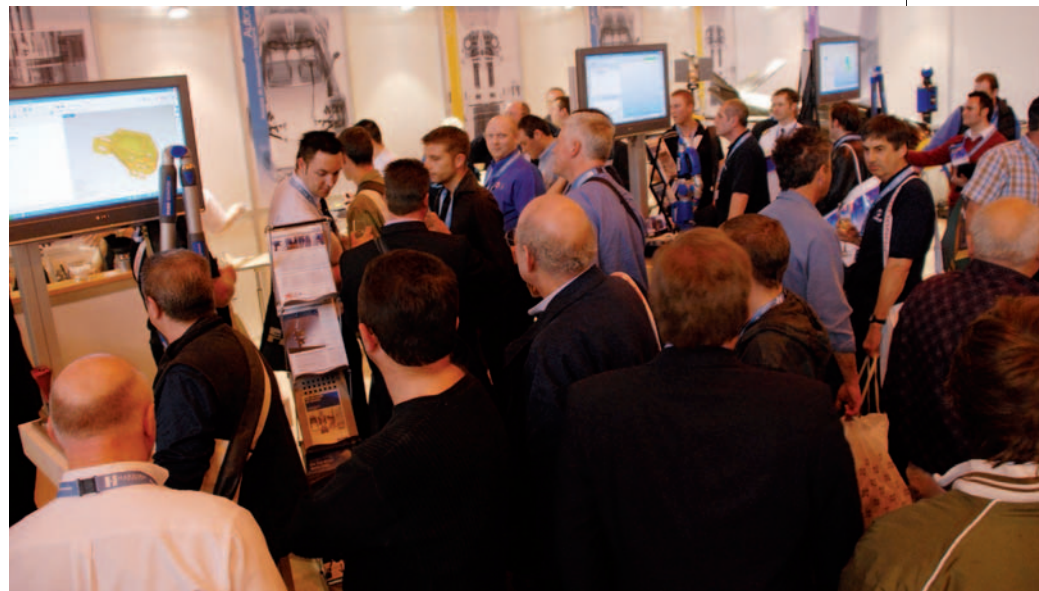
**Andrew Allcock spent five days at the MACH 2008 exhibition held in April and was witness to a frenzy of serious buying activity generated by an audience of some 27,000 visitors**

**T**here was a positive rush from exhibitors to praise MACH 2008, held at Birmingham's NEC from April 21 to 25. And it very much reflected the rush of visitors to the show.

The Manufacturing Technologies Association (MTA), MACH 2008 organiser, reported that visitor numbers were up a massive 21 per cent on the previous event held two years earlier. Unaudited figures revealed that 27,000 people flocked to the UK's largest manufacturing technology event, far exceeding even the most wildly optimistic estimates, either by exhibitors or the organiser. *Machinery* honestly owns up to the fact that it never envisaged such numbers – some 6,000 more visitors than MACH 2006, which itself was a very positive show compared to the two previous events.

## TIME AND MONEY WELL SPENT

It's no wonder that the phrase "best show ever", or similar accolades were hurled about freely after the doors closed. "Our most successful MACH to date", is how probe technology firm Blum-Novotest's company director, David Mold, described the event. "One of our most successful exhibitions yet," is how UK barfeed and automation specialist Hydrafeed's



*MACH 2008 exhibitor Faro had people queuing up for demonstrations on Wednesday morning*

operations director, Martyn Page, described it. Delcam hailed MACH 2008 the "best ever", as did Citizen Machinery UK (see box item, page 23). Quality equipment manufacturer Faro hailed the event "the most successful show ever" and, "we had people queuing up for demonstrations on Wednesday morning," offered CAD/CAM specialist Delcam. Sales manager Mark. Corrigan,

added: "I can't remember the last time that happened at a UK exhibition. This year's event generated more enquiries, from a higher-quality audience, than any previous show in the series of biennial events. "If anything, the exhibition was too busy at peak times," the company offered.

And the related machine/technology sales confirmed or made at the show reflected this upbeat chorus. One anonymous exhibitor was said to have secured an order valued at £10 million at the show, reported the MTA. The final tally of business done/won at the show will be published in due course, as is the norm, but in the mean time there were others who were less backward in coming forward in celebrating their success.

## MACH Product Launch Review

Accompanying this issue of *Machinery* is our *MACH Product Launch Review*. Taking in 'New at MACH' product launches from over 200 exhibitors, it is a ready reference for all those who visited MACH, and for those who didn't, providing brief information on the vast majority of products unveiled at the show, all in a single publication. Make sure nothing of interest has passed you by and read your copy.

For example, Haas Automation, Norwich, booked a record 37 machine sales at MACH 2008. And this went towards creating a record month (April) in which it sold 70 machines.

Haas probably also comes close to a record in the amount of material it processed at the show. With 19 machines on one of the largest single stands the organisers had ever booked for a MACH

## Remote monitoring move by Mori Seiki

Remote machine tool monitoring is usually taken to mean monitoring of a company's machines externally by the company's own personnel. Mori Seiki unveiled a service that sees the company providing remote monitoring services for its users. Called Mori Net, it offers remote maintenance service, monitoring machine alarms and information transmission via Internet, email or mobile, to the customer. In addition, machine operating status checks and periodic reports are offered.

In fact, Mori Net was launched as Caps Net some four years ago and it was first rolled out in Japan. Of course, in addition to the remote monitoring element, it offers local networking benefits such as program management/transmission.

established in 1983 to make indexing mechanisms, as it continues to do today.

Hardinge Group sold over £700,000 worth of machine tools and took orders to the value of £150,000 for workholding products at MACH. The company also reported it was following up the 250+ customer enquiries that were generated during the MACH week. Following the exhibition, the company reported a further 12 machine sales (worth £650,000).

The company also unveiled a new agency, Matec. This German company's range takes in travelling column, mill-turn, gantry and multi/twin-pallet swivel table machines. The range was an immediate hit, with Hardinge halfway through the show having taken well over 100 enquiries for this new range.

### THE XYZ OF JUBILATION

XYZ Machine Tools took orders for 19 machines in the week and more in the following one. The 19 machine tools were valued at more than £500,000, while a further £570,000 worth was confirmed

mid-way through the following week.

A jubilant Nigel Atherton, managing director, said he was confident of more orders in the weeks ahead as a result of taking part in "a very good show". And, describing the mood among visitors as upbeat and enquiries received on the stand as being of high quality, he said there is no sign of any loss of confidence as a consequence of the current 'credit squeeze'.



show, uniquely, says Haas Automation, all the machines performed representative metalcutting demonstrations, machining four tonnes of material throughout the five-day event.

Against this UK success for Haas, principal Haas Automation Inc's customer services director, John Roth, revealed that the company had set a new target for turnover – \$2 billion by 2015. This new target supersedes the previous one of becoming a \$1 billion turnover operation by 2010 because this year will see the company breach that milestone. Not bad for a company that made its first CNC machine in 1987, although it was

## Rebranding at MACH

Citizen agent NC Engineering appeared at MACH under its new name, Citizen Machinery UK. The change reflects the focus on Citizen sliding-head lathes and follows the purchase of NC Engineering shares by Citizen in June 2006, making the Watford-based firm a wholly owned subsidiary of Citizen Machinery, Japan.

And UK Miyano agent Macro CNC Machine Tools, Brierley Hill, West Midlands, also rebranded at MACH, becoming Miyano UK.

These two events also follow Japanese machine tool firm Citizen Machinery Co's purchase of 29.9 per cent of Miyano Machinery stock in 2006.



View across the halls; technology suppliers stand ready to greet interested buyers

Mori Seiki also celebrated, taking orders valued at £3.8 million. New customers ranged from small sub-contractors to blue-chip multi-nationals, many of whom were ordering additional machines based on the productivity and profitability achieved from previous investments in Mori Seiki.

Citizen Machinery UK's managing director, Geoff Bryant, said: "We took 20 orders on the stand which endorses acceptance of sliding-head CNCs as

offering the lowest part manufacturing cost for combined operations on bar material up to 32 mm diameter."

Follow-up to lead generation is in full swing, but the level of interest and subjects under discussion on the show stand are reckoned to draw in significantly more orders than normal over the next six months.

Initially orders are expected from the sub-contract sector but the level of potential projects from OEMs using the show to prepare investment budgets into 2009 gave confidence for the longer term, he suggested.

**ORDER BOOK BONANZA**

Mr Bryant summed up: "Last year we set a record in the UK of 100 Citizen machines installed. After such a

**Appropriate accuracy approach**

Hardinge Group unveiled its new Hardinge Spectrum Initiative at MACH 2008.

Many machine tool companies have a single product strategy that sees companies either forced to choose a machine that has more capability than is actually required or select one that will be asked to do too much, says the company's David Barber, director of corporate promotion and marketing manager.

Hardinge Group has, in the case of lathes and machining centres, structured its products in three levels: standard; performance; and high performance. So, for machining centres this means, XV, GX and XR, respectively, and for lathes this sees the progression SV, GS and SR. In grinding there are two tiers, incidentally.

These tiers do not only relate to functionality, which is how most people categorise different levels of performance, but also capability. So, the strategy asks how hard is the material, how tight the tolerance, what surface finish is required, and what level of production volume is required, for example.

A simple part, geometrically speaking, which might ostensibly demand a standard machine might also have a particular attribute – high material hardness, for example – which would mean it actually demands a higher capability machine.

With this product strategy, customers are not forced to buy more than they need, nor settle for something less, says Mr Barber.

The company has launched a web-based selection tool ([www.hardingespectrum.co.uk](http://www.hardingespectrum.co.uk)) to help customers steer their way through the capability, functionality, budget process – but still leaving final choice to the customer based on budget: "because there is always a budget that affects choice".

With this approach Hardinge Group is "trying to qualify real capability, real functionality and real budget", Mr Barber underlines.

He revealed also that this thinking now informs product development, helping to avoid the accidental creation of intermediate levels and so muddying the customer's decision-making process.



bumper year, 2008 started cautiously as some customers waited to weigh up the technology options at the show. Then the initial continuous stream of visitors to the stand almost ended up as a flood that has been reflected in an order book bonanza worth more than £2 million as the week progressed."

Fellow sliding-head technology specialist Star Micronics GB similarly

celebrated MACH success. In the first two days of the show, orders totalling £500,000 were taken by the company and by the end of the show, the figure was in excess of £1 million. Managing director Bob Hunt said that the high quality of some of the enquiries taken on the stand was cause to hope that the final tally of orders as a result of Star's participation at MACH will increase substantially.

Yamazaki Mazak UK also confirmed the positive outlook among visitors to MACH, seeing record numbers on its stand, who in turn produced the best level of enquiries for machine tools that the company has seen at a MACH show.

"From the first day our team was kept busy with positive interest from a steady flow of visitors," says Tony Saunders, sales director. "By the end of the week we had taken some 500 machine enquiries, which will be followed up in the coming weeks. Additionally, we have taken firm orders valued at £1.75 million."



Over the five days we registered well over 1,600 visitors on our stand.

"In addition to the 18 machines sold at the show, over 300 serious sales enquiries were also taken – and, in the first few days after MACH, a significant number of these have already been followed up resulting in a

generated by the company's Customer Services Business Team (EDM consumables; machine tool servicing and preventative maintenance contracts; training etc).

**ANOTHER WORLD**

There were many other reporting large sales figures, including Faro, which sold five of its Faro Gage portable CMM arms, while Leader CNC sold a Samsung

**Dances with CNC programs**

Hurco Europe underlined ease of programming on its stand at MACH – Jenny Bowen (left), a professional dancer, actress and singer, demonstrated the control to visitors throughout the show. After just six hours' training at Hurco's showroom and technical centre in High Wycombe, Ms Bowen was able to create a cutter path to produce a demonstration component using the control's conversational programming and touch-screen navigation.

Weeks later at the NEC, after a short refresher on the first morning of MACH, she was able to demonstrate the user-friendliness of the Ultimax 4 running the latest WinMax Windows-based software.

Ms Bowen programmed a 2D component that comprised five blended arcs flowing into a straight line, a large central hole that was interpolated by a milling cutter, and various other drilled holes including eight spaced as 12 holes on an incomplete pitch circle of 65 mm diameter. Programming all the individual elements of the cycle took just three minutes, although each presentation lasted eight minutes including explanation of the simple steps involved.

David Waghorn, managing director of Hurco Europe: "Shopfloor programming is just as important today as it has ever been, particularly in the UK where we tend to specialise in one-offs and small batch manufacture.

"Although most engineering workshops have some form of CAD/CAM, the smart ones use shopfloor programming as much as possible for 2D work and save computer-aided procedures for complex 3D surfaces."

600 Group said that results from MACH 2008 were "splendid". Ten machines were sold from the 600 Centre stand during the show, while both the ElectroX and Pratt Burnerd International/Crawford Collets stands enjoyed more activity than at the last MACH. Crawford Collets sold a collet chuck within 15 minutes of the show opening, while overall, more than 1,200 serious enquiries were received for 600 Group products.

**TARGET TOPPING PERFORMANCE**

Mills Manufacturing Technology was yet another exhibitor to heap praise on the show, prompted by an order intake of over £2 million.

The company sold 18 Doosan machine tools, meaning sales performance at the end of April (up to and including the MACH Show), was above target at £11 million for the first four months of 2008 – 105 new machines having been sold. (In 2007 Mills sales performance topped £35 million for the first time; equating to some 335 machine tool deliveries).

Mike Jenkins, managing director, said: "We had a great MACH show. The phenomenal interest shown by precision manufacturers in the latest Doosan machine tool technology meant that we were rushed off our feet.

further five machines being sold.

"The fact that 11 of these machine tool orders came from companies (now customers) that were completely new to us is particularly pleasing, and demonstrates the pulling power and attractiveness of the Mills/Doosan offering."

GF AgieCharmilles sold 12 new machine tools – half to new customers – with a combined order value in excess of £1.4 million. In addition it took over 80 additional serious and positive machine tool sales enquiries taken during the show, and a further £120,000 of sales

Machine Tool Engineering Company 12S DMC turning centre.

Against the mainstream media's pre-occupation with the global finance industry's woes and UK housing wobbles, MACH seemed to be taking place in a different world. And with much of UK engineering manufacturing focused on higher value work taking in aerospace, oil and gas and motorsport, it may very well be that, as WNT UK's managing director Tony Pennington postulated in *Machinery's* last issue, worries elsewhere may bypass manufacturing and, in particular, engineering manufacturing. □