

Launch of Africa's biggest machine tools exhibition

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The recent launch of Machine Tools Africa was attended by industry leaders interested in the latest show updates and new features that will be incorporated in the in 2024 trade exhibition. An event owned by the Machine Tool Merchants' Association of South Africa (MTMA) in partnership with organisers Specialised Exhibitions, Machine Tools Africa will be taking place at the Expo Centre in Nasrec, Johannesburg, from 21-24 May 2024.

Recognised as the biggest machine tools exhibition in Africa, Machine Tools Africa is a showcase of cutting-edge developments across the machine tool and related industries. The expo is designed to showcase the very latest global machine tool technology and to highlight the importance of local suppliers and their international manufacturing partners.

Metal processing is a critical sector of the South African economy and serves as an essential input to multiple industries. According to the Metals and Engineering Indaba, the industry contributes around 28% towards the country's manufacturing GDP, and according to NUMSA employs an excess of 360,000 people. Despite its importance, this industry faces challenges that need addressing to ensure its sustainability.

Challenges such as high energy supply costs, energy interruption, increasing raw material costs as well as inadequate infrastructure are what the industry faces on a day-to-day basis.

Speaking at the launch, Joanne Canossa, MTMA Chairperson, says that "We can all agree that the past few years leading up to this much anticipated show has been nothing short of manic. Machine Tools Africa 2024 is a great step towards the recovery and upgrading of local manufacturing businesses in South Africa."

"At the show, industry players have an opportunity to highlight technological advancements and how technological infrastructure for human-machine collaboration can streamline processes and improve high level decision making. It is this combination of technology and human creativity that defines smart factories and industry 5.0. It will be very exciting to see how our members as well as other companies utilise this platform to target and entice the manufacturing sector."

Positive impact of Machine Tools Africa on the machine tool industry

The previous Machine Tools Africa exhibition attracted just under 6,000 visitors and featured 105 exhibitors. Seventy-seven percent of the visitors had the authority to make purchasing decisions, making the show a crucial platform for business to connect with potential customers. Eighty-eight percent of visitors attended the show in search of new products, technologies, and trends. These numbers are testament to the importance of this event in the industry.

"We are delighted to again be in partnership with the Machine Tool Merchants Association for the next edition of Machine Tools Africa," says Charlene Hefer, Portfolio Director at Specialised Exhibitions. "The collaboration is significant as our combined expertise and industry insights will bring immense value to our exhibitors and attendees alike."

"Over 50% of our exhibition space has already been sold for 2024 through our pre-launch to MTMA members, and this is just the beginning. We are committed to reaching an even wider market and attracting the most influential players in the industry."

Substantial investment in power generation

Specialised Exhibitions has taken significant steps to enhance the infrastructure of Machine Tools Africa, having made a substantial investment in power generation.

“We are hiring in over 2MVA (megavolt-ampere) of power capacity to ensure the exhibition and all machinery run seamlessly throughout the event,” explains Hefer. “This commitment to providing a reliable power supply underscores our dedication to creating an optimal environment for exhibitors and visitors alike. We understand that efficient machinery operation is paramount to showcasing the full potential of the showcased technologies and products. By investing in robust power infrastructure, we aim to facilitate uninterrupted demonstrations, enabling exhibitors to fully highlight the capabilities of their innovative machinery.”

Skills development to be a focal area at the show

A shortage of skilled artisans is another challenge facing the metal processing industry. MTMA has been working closely with Specialised Exhibitions to incorporate skills development at Machine Tools Africa 2024 in a professional and competitive way. WorldSkills South Africa will be a participant at the show, adding a whole new dimension to the exhibition. It will highlight the incredible talent and skills of young professionals with an exciting competition taking place during the show.

There will also be a seminar theatre on the exhibition floor, where industry experts will share their knowledge and insights through engaging presentations and panel discussions.

For more information, visit the Machine Tools Africa website www.machinetoolsafrica.co.za or contact Keraysha Pillay at Keraysha.Pillay@montgomerygroup.com Specialised Exhibitions is a division of Montgomery Group.

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