



MFSA News Digest

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MFSA—Leading the Future

1998 was a very busy year for the MFSA. We have much to be proud of, and much yet to accomplish. I would like to take this time to reflect upon the state of MFSA over the past year and address plans for the new year.

A Year of Change

1998 was truly a year marked by many transitions. Dick Crain retired as our executive director; Jerry Poll, our longtime secretary, retired; and we gained a new executive director, Diana Tringali. MFSA closed its Chicago office and opened a new one in Washington, DC, in shared office arrangements with the National Association of Metal Finishers (NAMF) staff. Finally, in the culmination of several years of work, MFSA became the National Supplier Affiliate of the NAMF.

Industry Affiliations—Many of the benefits of our affiliation are just beginning to be realized. MFSA members are active members of the NAMF Board of Directors and are serving on national committees. Many of the local NAMF affiliates are opening their doors and welcoming suppliers as full members. This is a significant change and benefit for suppliers. This will allow many of you increased involvement on a local basis with your customers and colleagues. This local connection was one that the national nature of MFSA did not offer. Last year, we cooperated with AESF and NAMF and produced a Joint Party at SUR/FIN®, which allowed us to produce a quality event we could not have done on our own. Many of the efforts of our NAMF affiliation and our joint projects with AESF and NAMF will begin to show more tangible benefits in the months to come. These were long-term strategies designed to benefit our members, as well as the industry as a whole.

Core Member Benefits—MFSA continues to work on refining our member benefits. In 1998, we published a new membership directory and established a

quarterly newsletter. A new *Quality Metal Finishing Guide on Pretreatment for Paint and Powder Coating* was published and other *QMF Guides* are being updated and revised. In addition, work continues on the industry indices and the Business Barometer. A new survey was launched to provide benchmarks for our member companies. The Credit Exchange will get a new look at the beginning of the year as it moves its reporting to the Internet. This member benefit alone can provide your company with cost savings that more than pay for your membership in MFSA.

Our committees continue to work on many valuable projects, including the Metals Report, the Surface Preparation Series and the Exhaust Initiative, to name a few. MFSA members continue to provide leadership in the Government Relations Program and the Strategic Goals Initiative, in addition to a high-profile role in EPA's Environmental Technology Verification Program.

New Initiatives—In 1999, we will embark upon projects with a renewed commitment to our membership. MFSA is working hard to set our members apart from the rest of the supplier community. Here is just a sampling of what is planned for the new year.

- The NAMF Directory will include listings for MFSA member companies. NAMF President Dick Carey will include in his introduction to the directory an appeal for NAMF members to favor MFSA member companies when making their purchasing decisions.
- MFSA will introduce an MFSA Buyer's Guide at SUR/FIN® '99. This will feature product information on each member company exhibiting at the show and will be distributed to attendees.
- Member companies will be provided with nametag lanyards at AESF Week and SUR/FIN® '99 to distinguish their companies from other exhibitors as MFSA-affiliated companies.

- MFSA will introduce a series of testimonial advertisements featuring NAMF members and why they buy from MFSA members.
- An extensive products and services search capability will be added to MFSA's website. It will include links to member company websites.
- MFSA members-only receptions will be held during major industry functions.
- Enhanced recognition of member companies, as well as a new awards program.
- Shared member resources, such as the addition of a Videotape Library on management and human resource issues that members can borrow for staff training.

Expanding Our Markets—Another significant focus for this year is expanding the market for plated finishes. MFSA, together with NAMF, is a co-sponsor of Coatings '99 to be held September 21–23 in Dallas. We have developed an excellent program to educate this significant market on the benefits of plated finishes. In addition, the "Electroplating for Automotive" CD-ROM is nearly finished. We will embark on a major industry distribution, as well as make the CD-ROM available to members for their own promotional use.

Strategic Planning—The MFSA Officers and Board of Trustees will be meeting in January for a strategic planning session. At this session, we will focus on our commitment to our members and the benefits we provide. We will be looking at our short-term goals and objectives, as well as a long-term industry perspective. We are excited about the many benefits to come in the next year and are committed to bringing MFSA closer to our individual members in 1999. We look forward to our members' support and involvement in the year to come. We encourage you to let us know how we can better serve our industry.

—Blair R. Vandivier, CEF
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