

## **SME to Acquire Tooling U to Become World's Leading Provider of Manufacturing Knowledge**

Society of Manufacturing Engineers

*Meets Challenge of Growing Need for Skilled Labor by Building on Existing Training and Certification Programs*

DEARBORN, Mich., Sept. 15, 2010 — Creating a powerhouse in manufacturing work force development, the Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME), based in Dearborn, Mich., and Tooling University LLC (Tooling U), based in Cleveland, announced they have signed a definitive agreement for SME to acquire all outstanding shares of Tooling U, a leading provider of online training for the manufacturing industry. The move is an important step in SME's strategy to become the unquestioned leader of content development and delivery, addressing the global and growing need for skilled labor.

The substantial resources of SME's certification products, in-person training and webinar offerings will be combined with Tooling U's online training platform and more than 400 courses to provide the global manufacturing community with a comprehensive source of manufacturing knowledge. Educating the current and future manufacturing work force is critical for the health and growth of the manufacturing industry.

"By 2012, it is estimated the United States alone will be short 3 million skilled workers," said Barbara M. Fossum, PhD, FSME, and president of SME. "Acquiring Tooling U is part of a new initiative that will enable us to offer comprehensive learning and work force development solutions to help companies combat this increasing talent shortage, and to provide a much broader span of continuing education opportunities for member career growth."

The closing of the transaction is expected at the end of September, and at that time, SME will be the sole shareholder. Tooling U's online training complements SME's highly regarded in-person training and certification programs to create a flexible, on-demand, customized and content-rich blended learning solution.

"As the world of knowledge delivery continues to evolve, we will leverage the expertise and wealth of knowledge among our members to accelerate the development of new learning programs and meet the changing needs of the marketplace," Fossum said. The full range of SME professional development resources is designed to benefit educational institutions such as high schools, community colleges, tech schools and universities, as well as practitioners and companies.

With the power of its collective offerings, SME will fill the gap for individuals seeking

advancement in their careers in many areas of a manufacturing organization through continuing education, including in manufacturing management and leadership, according to Mark Tomlinson, SME executive director & general manager.

Following the acquisition, SME's Tooling U will continue to operate without interruption, providing online education with its existing staff from its base in Cleveland. Going forward, SME will invest in additional online courses and a more interactive interface to support all levels of employees from the machinist and shop-floor worker to manufacturing engineers and management personnel.

"No other entity in manufacturing has the history, expertise and reach of SME," said Chad Schron, co-founder of Tooling U. "During the last decade, we have built Tooling U into the number one source of online training for the manufacturing industry. Now, with SME's vast and growing resources, we will have the ability to provide our customers and SME members with new and enhanced online education along with a full portfolio of work force development options, all in one place."

## Industry Call to Action

SME continues its tradition of engaging manufacturing's brightest minds by issuing a call to its members to help address work force development challenges. Members are encouraged to join SME as it accelerates the development of educational content and innovative delivery methods for manufacturing practitioners. Anyone interested in learning more or participating should contact Jeannine Kunz, SME director of marketing & professional development, [calltoaction@sme.org](mailto:calltoaction@sme.org) [1].

## About SME:

**The Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME)** is a professional society supporting manufacturing professionals. Through its member programs, publications, expositions and professional development resources, SME promotes an increased awareness of manufacturing engineering and helps keep manufacturing professionals up to date on leading trends and technologies. Visit SME at [www.sme.org](http://www.sme.org) [2].

**Editor's Note:** Visit the **new [SME Media Center](#) [3]** for the latest Society news, one-stop access to SME Events, Manufacturing Quicklinks, SME social media sites, RSS feed and more.

## About Tooling U:

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**Tooling U** is the leading developer of online training for manufacturing companies and educational institutions. Founded in 2000 by manufacturers for manufacturers, Tooling U offers more than 400 easy-to-use, industry-driven, Web-based classes that engage learners, and boost morale and results. More than 1,200 organizations across the globe employ Tooling U to reap measurable improvements in knowledge and productivity. For more information about Tooling U, visit [www.toolingu.com](http://www.toolingu.com) [4].

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