

Yamazaki Open House

Yamazaki Mazak is holding its latest Open House at the Mazak European Technology Centre in Worcester on 16-19 November. The event will showcase 19 of Mazak's machines, with live demonstrations. It will also feature a 'state of the art' flight simulator, allowing visitors to try their hand at flying and landing a commercial airliner, along with expert tuition from experienced pilots.

Making their UK debut will be the VC Smart 430A and the QT Smart 200-M. Both machines are manufactured in Worcester and feature Mazatrol Smart controls to ensure rapid programming and set-up capabilities. The Open House will also feature two new additions to the Integrex range. To register, call 01905 755755.

Branding change

Dormer Tools Ltd (Tel: 0870 850 4466) has announced a new branding strategy for its high-performance drilling, milling and threading ranges. It has created two productivity classes to promote quick and easy customer identification of the optimum tool. The 'Elect' class of tools will represent top performance in particular materials and specific applications, while the 'Spectrum' class focuses on versatility over a multitude of materials and defined operations. This change will affect more than 30% of Dormer's cutting-tool range.



In-house training pays off

KMF (Precision Sheet Metal) Ltd, Newcastle under Lyme (Tel: 01782 569060), is reaping the rewards of its decision four years ago to bring all apprentice training in-house; its first- and third-year apprentices have all passed their external examinations with flying colours, achieving results better than the national average. Particular praise went to Joe Pemberton, who achieved 95% in his first-year exams — a result that marks him down as one of the best apprentices in the

country. Jenny Conlon, KMF's training-centre manager, says: "We are extremely pleased with the results achieved by all our apprentices, as they give us real confidence that the investments we have made in bringing training in-house and the investment in the training centre are really paying dividends in delivering top-quality engineers for the future of the business."

The picture shows all the apprentices at KMF, from first-years to fourth-years.

"Because you're (not) worth it!"

A recent poll by an HR consultancy asked nearly 1,300 workers if they thought they were under-paid (plus what they thought they were worth to their employer, and what they actually earned). The data showed that 93% believe they are under-paid, and only 4% are happy with their salary: 61% over-estimate their financial worth, while 18% wrongly think they are under-paid by £5,000 each year and a further 29% believe that they should be paid an extra £3,000. Only 8% of those asked under-estimated their

financial worth to their company when compared to the market and sector that they work within.

Kirsty Burgess, co-founder of Reabur.com, said: "This research surprised me; not so much because people believe that they under-paid — I think we would all like a little extra money each month — more because 18% of workers believe they are worth an extra £5,000 each year, which shows that they are out of touch with the market rate for their role."

Close control

PSL DataTrack, the Surrey-based supplier of production management and business administration software, has published its latest *Guide to standard costs*. The simple-to-use guide includes sections on overheads, equipment and labour costs, hourly rates and their application, as well as a calculation template. PSL's DataTrack software is used extensively throughout the engineering sub-contract industry and other manufacturing sectors to provide companies with close control over production. To obtain the new guide, call 0845 634 5932.

Plans for UK immigration cap cause concern

Executives from three of Japan's biggest car manufacturers have warned the Government that plans to cap the number of immigrant workers coming to the UK could have serious consequences for their industry. Senior bosses from Honda, Toyota and Nissan, which employ more than 10,000 people in the UK, delivered the warning to Damian Green, the Immigration Minister. Changes to the immigration rules are

due to be introduced next year, imposing quotas on the number of non-European Union workers. According to many analysts, they could be particularly damaging to the UK's car industry, which is now almost entirely in the hands of non-European owners.

The companies claim that imposing quotas would make it harder for car makers to launch new models in the UK. Manu-

facturers typically transfer small teams of engineers from their overseas R&D bases to the UK for a brief period to help launch new cars, particularly if they use new technologies or require new skills to manufacture. Toyota, for example, used engineers recruited from its base in Japan to help the workforce at its Burnaston plant in Derbyshire begin production of the Auris hybrid car this summer.