

# Preservation Mode



Aaron Fagan, Senior Editor

As I write this, I am sipping hot coffee at Caffè Dante in an extremely cold New York City. I flew in from Tyler, TX—which got its own battering—and the severe cold lingering here is a remnant of Winter Storm Fern, the system that covered much of the country in snow and ice. The purpose of the trip is to give a poetry recital at the Amant Foundation in Brooklyn, of all things. Outside, people hurry past with their heads down, powering through what's left of the storm. It's a fitting image for the gear industry in 2026: heads down, pushing through conditions not of their own making, waiting for a break in the weather.

Our annual State of the Gear Industry survey arrived against that backdrop—tariff policy that shifted without warning through much of 2025, leaving companies in what Klingelnberg's Prasad Kizhakel called an environment that “rewards preservation over growth and innovation.” The results, beginning on page 18, reveal an industry adapting with clear eyes, building relationships that can weather policy storms.

Elsewhere in this issue, MPMA president Matthew Croson lays out the association's 2026 playbook, including a DC fly-in

in May. MPMA Technical Services announces the expansion of the Fall Technical Meeting's program. And speaking of new frontiers, MPMA has officially launched its fifth emerging technology committee, this one focused on eVTOL air mobility.

On the technical side, we present the first of four excerpts from Dr. Hermann J. Stadtfeld's new book, *Gear Technology Solutions*. Researchers from RWTH Aachen present findings on how tooth root contour deviations affect bending strength, work that should give quality engineers pause about what they're not measuring.

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Walking back to my hotel through Washington Square Park, I looked up at the Arch, reading its epigraph, taking new courage from the old words: “Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair.”

