

PLAN AHEAD

Indianapolis in 2001 and beyond is a good move for AGMA.

Indianapolis is a nice city. No. It's a great city for a convention. The facilities and the city are modern, clean and bright. The Convention Center is easy to get to by either car or plane, and its central location in the heart of town and the enclosed skyway system between it and major hotels put visitors close to amenities like restaurants, shopping and entertainment. The people are friendly and go out of their way to make visitors feel welcome.

My own very positive experience at Gear Expo '95 and the numerous comments I heard from other exhibitors and visitors convince me that AGMA could do no better than to make Indianapolis its permanent site for the Gear Expo. Located in the heart of gear manufacturing country, it's a day's drive for approximately 60% of the gear manufacturers in the U.S., making it a big draw for single-day visitors. Prices, both for the visitor and the exhibitor, are reasonable—far less than in most major metro areas, which attracts more exhibitors and, therefore, more visitors as well. And make no mistake: those attendance numbers are crucial to the continuing success of the Expo.

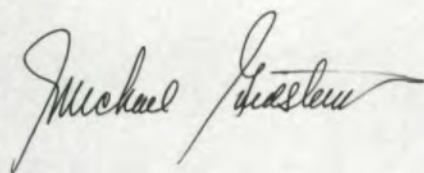
AGMA is unfortunately committed to Cobo Hall in Detroit in 1997 and to Nashville in 1999. While I and many others are less than thrilled with those choices, particularly downtown Detroit, which grows to resemble Batman's Gotham City more closely all the time, there's no reason to assume the Gear Expo will not do well at either place. AGMA may have to work harder to attract visitors to these somewhat less than optimum sites and to over-

come poor decisions made years ago, but expositions in those locations can still be successful.

The good news/bad news story of Gear Expo is the fact that the show is now big enough to have to be very selective about its sites. Space and facilities that can accommodate the large machines being shown are not found in every city, and the ones that are available fill up early. The Gear Expo could not go back to Indianapolis before 2001, even if it weren't already committed elsewhere.

Fortunately AGMA seems to be moving quickly and is negotiating now for Indianapolis in 2001. The next logical move should be to work with Indianapolis to make the Convention Center the permanent site for the Expo. A fixed location popular with exhibitors and visitors alike and near the geographic and economic center of the gear industry could be the linchpin of the continuing growth and success of the Gear Expo.

The votes are in. The gear community has made it pretty clear that it would welcome an Indianapolis location. It is my hope that the AGMA planners make it happen.



Michael Goldstein
Publisher and Editor-in-Chief



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