



NMA's 20th Anniversary Manufacturing Conference Brings Ontario Manufacturers  
Together to Tackle Today's Challenges

**January 19, 2026 (Cobourg, ON)**

On March 4<sup>th</sup> in Cobourg, Ontario's manufacturing sector will take centre stage as the NMA marks its 20th Anniversary Manufacturing Conference, bringing industry leaders together to address the most pressing challenges facing manufacturers today.

In partnership with RBC the conference is scheduled for Wednesday, March 4th where 150 manufacturing delegates from across Ontario will come together at the Best Western Hotel to learn, share best practices, expand their network and overall together strive for high performance.

As we celebrate the conference's 20th anniversary, we've reflected on its origins and shaped this year's program to honour that foundation. Local talent and industry leadership have been brought together to address regional challenges and highlight how manufacturers can turn them into opportunities.

While global forces continue to shape the industry, manufacturers still face day-to-day, grassroots challenges. Rising energy costs, culture building, artificial intelligence, mental health, health and safety, and future planning will all be key topics of discussion at this year's event

One topic generating particular interest is artificial intelligence — but not in the traditional sense. Manufacturers succeed by following established policies and procedures that keep workers safe and operations running efficiently. As AI becomes part of the workplace, important questions arise: Do you have clear policies governing AI use? How are privacy and access to records being managed? At this year's conference, we will dive deep into these emerging challenges and what they mean for manufacturers.

A highlight this year is our ability to host the Ontario East Economic Development Commission for an in depth panel discussion on new economic strategies for industry in Eastern Ontario. The Eastern Ontario Manufacturing Resilience & Trade Diversification Pilot Report was compiled over the summer of 2025 with support from Next Generation Manufacturing Canada (NGen). The report provides recommendations for regional economic initiatives to support manufacturers impacted by the evolving global trade challenges.

The presentation "Ontario East Regional Framework: Developing New Economic Development Strategies Adapting to New Realities for Manufacturers and Trade" will be delivered by a panel of experts with connections to resources to assist manufacturers to ensure the transition to the new trade world is a positive one.

This year's conference also includes the traditional favourites – relevant workshops, delicious catered breakfast and lunch, and keynote speakers – all LOCAL!

“We are proud to serve as this year’s Presenting Sponsor, underscoring our deep commitment to advancing industry leadership and fostering collaboration. As a longstanding champion of manufacturing and the leaders and workforce that drive it forward, we look forward to the meaningful learning opportunities, and connection this year’s conference will bring to participants across the province,” said Lydia Marciano, Presenting Sponsor, RBC.

NMA President Arnaud Raymond explained: “We are excited to bring top local talent together with expert consultation from across Eastern Ontario to help Ontario manufacturers strive for excellence. At the NMA, collaboration is at the core of what we do, and we’re thrilled to share that value by creating an environment where so many can come together in one day. The purpose of the conference is to strengthen our industry’s knowledge and skills while building synergies across the province—and it’s all happening right here in Cobourg.”

- 30 -

For more information please visit our event website at [www.themanufacturingconference.ca](http://www.themanufacturingconference.ca) or contact below:

Darla Price  
Executive Director, NMA  
905-424-4232  
[www.thenma.ca](http://www.thenma.ca)