

news | views | reviews



Confederation of British Metalforming

CBM Market Report

The Confederation of British Metalforming (CBM) and Midlands based manufacturing and technology strategy specialists Arvada Strategic Marketing have joined forces to produce an exclusive industry specific market research report. The report, available to CBM members at the discounted rates aims to be a useful information and business development tool.

The objective of the report is to give CBM members an overview of both the UK and European markets for the various sectors associated with the Confederation (Sheet metal, Forgings and Fasteners), supported by end user market information, key market indicators and feedback from members.

The report has been divided into five key sections:

- Section 1:** Introduction and End User Market Update
- Section 2:** CBM Membership Survey
- Section 3:** Sheet Metal UK and European market overview
- Section 4:** Forging and Cold Formed UK and European market overview
- Section 5:** Fasteners UK and European market overview

It is intended that this report will act as a foundation for the CBM to support its members in terms of providing regular market updates and trend information in the future.

To enable members to get the maximum benefit from the research, the report is available in either its complete format or as individual reports representing the various CBM membership groups (Sheet, Forgings and Fasteners).

The report is only available to CBM members at the following prices:

- Option 1:** Full report = £375 (+vat)
- Option 2:** Individual section report (Sheet metal, Forgings or Fasteners) comprising of Section 1, Section 2 (membership group specific feedback compared with full results summary) and Section 3 (membership group specific information) = £275 (+vat)

For more information contact the CBM on 0121 601 6350.





The Energy Brokers Ltd (TEBL) - Energy Market Outlook for 2009

Linked with the global economic downturn, the UK energy markets have lost significant ground over the last nine months.

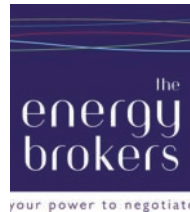
Losses have been more confined in recent weeks, however, as price floors and technical resistance become increasingly commonplace.

Whilst the fundamental outlook suggests a continuation of the current bearish trend in the short-term, with most seeing Winter 2009 particularly as overpriced, a mounting number of risks look set to appear during the third quarter of the year (Q3-09). Although wholesale prices are

not necessarily expected to show excessive movements over the summer, it is anticipated that some upward correction will occur as the market looks towards next winter and any associated uncertainties.

Given current price levels and the potential upside drivers, TEBL's view for those considering fixed price contracts would be to look to secure deals prior to Q3, for 24 to 36 months where available, with a view to being out of the market before economic recovery and the inevitable price rebound takes hold. For those on or considering flexible contracts, again our advice would be to extend or select a supplier now, so that you have ample time to set up a solid risk management strategy that allows for forward purchases.

TheEnergyBrokers Ltd (TEBL) provide advice and support for over 1,000 clients, assisting with energy procurement, post-contract account management, market intelligence, online financial and consumption reporting, as well as bill validation services. If you would like to find out more about our independent, open-book and transparent services and ways we could help your business save money on energy costs, [contact sales@tebl.com](mailto:sales@tebl.com) or call 01 16 235 7300 for a free, no-obligation chat.



Corus and Salzgitter continue development of special strip

Corus (Ijmuiden) and Salzgitter say they have been encouraged by their joint efforts in developing manganese-rich strip steels, and on Wednesday signed an agreement to continue this cooperation.

The European steelmakers have been jointly exploring production technologies and application opportunities for high strength and ductility (HSD) steels since 2005. These grades have a manganese content of around 15%, and can be used to make parts with a complex geometrical structure combined with high strength requirements, the partners say.

Potential applications are sophisticated components for mechanical engineering, notably in the automotive sector. The partners say they will provide progress updates in the course of 2009.

The project involves a revival of thin strip casting efforts, of the type known as belt strip casting, on a facility at Salzgitter's Peine works. "Both developments have happened in parallel," a Salzgitter spokesman tells Steel Business Briefing. "For the HSD alloy concept, this casting technology is a necessity," he adds.

Marjan Oudeman, executive director, Corus Strip Products Division, commented, "This product will help them [automotive manufacturers] to build lighter yet safer vehicles enabling lower CO2 emissions."

Sub contracting

sector shows hidden strength in UK manufacturing

With bookings up 20% on 2008 and 180 individual exhibitors already lined up, Subcon 2009 continues to highlight the fact that there are still areas of strong activity in UK manufacturing – particularly in the area of subcontract engineering.

Subcon, which takes place from 9 to 11 June at the NEC, is the UK's national and international showcase for subcontract manufacturing services. Its exhibitors cover all aspects of mechanical and electronic manufacture, such as machined parts,

plastic mouldings, circuitry, fabrication, profiling and castings.

Visitors range from large OEMs and smaller companies that have their own products to higher tier suppliers – the one thing that they have in common is that they want an outside supplier to make components for them rather than manufacturing them in-house.

At the same time, there is a growing demand for outsourced manufacturing from companies that are less certain about the future.



Subcon 2009 will give buyers the chance to source all types of subcontract manufacturing services from the UK's biggest showcase of national and international suppliers.

Manufacturing services on offer cover everything from machined parts, electronic assemblies, castings, plastic mouldings and metal fabrications, through to full manufacturing services, design and build, and rapid prototyping.

www.subconshow.co.uk For further

Are you using material fit for purpose?

Material suppliers can create major problems into the metal stamping process that give us a headache trying to resolve. This gives issues trying to make a consistent pressing. Understanding the material, blank or coil can help determine the expectation for product design and the stamping process.

Raw material manufactures and stockists have their own process standards to control.

We are aware of edge bow, camber, dish, crown etc etc.

These conditions we receive tend to be a normal

and accepted in the metal pressing industry. The only way to improve quality is to insist on it!

Technology has dramatically moved on in our metal processing industry including our raw material suppliers which many of the everyday listed problems can be eliminated or should be eliminated.

In a normal production period think of how much down time is linked to raw material problems. A coil could have camber, it may have hardness or gauge variation or surface imperfections.

Many material suppliers make to a commercial British

Standard specification. The fact is that these specifications have been out dated by technology and need to be rewritten.

Our material suppliers are our life line and future so please discuss your needs with them ensuring that the quality is fit for purpose and the agreed specification is written in detail on your purchase order.

For further information please contact Adrian Nicklin, CBM Sheet Metal Specialist, at the CBM offices on 0121 601 6350 or email: adrian.nicklin@britishmetalfforming.com.

CBM Fastener Sector Meeting

15 people attended a lively CBM Fastener Sector meeting on 26th March at the National Metalforming Centre. The meeting was presided over by Paul Denning of Barton Cold-form Ltd, the Fastener Sector Chairman, and he introduced two speakers on topics that are very relevant to manufacturing industry in the current climate.

Terence Madkins, International Trade Advisor at UK Trade & Investment, described the various ways that UKTI is set up to support manufacturers that want to explore the potential of new foreign markets. Some of this help is free of charge, in the form of advice from International Trade Advisors before, during and after a visit to a targeted foreign country. There is also financial support for market visits and tradeshows that can substantially mitigate the cost of investigating a new market. The slides

used for this presentation are available to CBM members.

After this, Kevin Reynolds, Senior Commercial Banking Manager with HSBC, talked about funding for manufacturing industry in general, and the Enterprise Finance Guarantee Scheme in particular. This scheme is designed to draw on funds made available by Lord Mandelson to support industry during the current scarcity of bank monies. However, little of it has so far been accessed, and apparently the banks involved believe this is because it applies to "viable" businesses, and it may require substantial financial investigation to establish viability, and the costs of this investigation are passed on to the company requesting the funds. So other, pre-existing forms of financing may be more readily available.

Following the two guest speakers, John Houseman of CBM reviewed energy costs, and

told the meeting that an unwanted new cost was being imposed on manufacturing companies who supply the automotive industry. When a company prepares to renew their energy contracts, they are being asked for bank guarantees for three months supply, which is very difficult for some companies, particularly those that are reliant on bank funding that is not readily forthcoming at present.

Though attendees found the information provided at the meeting was useful and interesting, the overall mood was sombre because of the uncertainty of the economic situation.

For further information please contact Dr John Newnham, CBM Fastener Specialist, on 0121 601 6350 or email: john.newnham@britishmetalforming.com.

European Industrial Fasteners Institute (EIFI)

The EIFI Annual Congress is an assembly of the fastener manufacturers from across Europe, and is a chance to meet and talk to the major players in the European fastener

industry. For 2009, the venue is Barcelona, with the meetings held at the Hotel Condes de Barcelona.

The conference sessions are on Friday 29th May, with the various specialist groups, aerospace, automotive, stainless steel, etc, meeting during the morning. This is followed by the General Assembly in the afternoon, at which all of the working groups present their reports. The

Congress is preceded on Thursday evening 27th May by a cocktail reception and dinner, and finishes with the Congress Dinner on the evening of Friday 29th. All full members of the fastener sector of CBM are welcome to attend.

For further information please contact Dr John Newnham at the CBM offices on 0121 601 6350 or email: john.newnham@britishmetalforming.com.

Euroforge Automotive Group Report March 2009

Nearly 50 delegates attended the Euroforge quarterly meeting in Paris in March. Turkey, France, Germany, Poland, Sweden, Italy, Spain, Czech Republic and the UK were all represented. The main topic of conversation was the dire state of trade for the forging industry in Europe all the attendees agreed that the downturn had been more severe and sudden than any previous experience in this type of recession.

The round table discussions confirmed the level of trade would be 40% down across Europe for the first quarter of 2009, commercial vehicle and construction machinery sectors had been the worst hit with volumes down 60%. One Caterpillar factory was only working one day a week. However the optimists of the group estimated the year will end 25% down on 2008, many thought this was too optimistic.

France: although the production volumes were well down the Government was offering short time working assistance together with the car scrapping scheme where drivers scrapping a car

over 9 years old will be given a certificate for €1,000 to be used against a new or nearly car. Since January 2009 the French Government has made it law to pay outstanding bills with any company trading in France to pay the outstanding balance within 60 days. This was seen as positive move and perhaps other Governments be lobbied to follow their example?

Germany: here the automotive sector of the forging industry had been badly affected with one forging company reported to be working one week on one week off. Here again the car scrapping scheme had been introduced and €2,500 given against a new or newly car had stimulated some demand and reports of increased sales were welcome. Again the German government was helping companies with their short time working avoiding layoffs of workers in the short term.

Italy: the scrapping scheme also introduced in Italy and car owners were given €1,500 to scrap an old car, however it does appear that the incentive is only effective if over €2,000 is offered. Again

the government was providing short time working assistance to forging companies and there had been no reported company losses at present. However Fiat the largest car maker in Italy had pushed payments out from 120 days to 150 days causing more problems for cash strapped forging companies.

Discussion followed on how to protect payment from companies that may go into receivership, the advice from the more legal representatives recommended a change in supply terms and conditions to include a LIEN clause which ensures that title does not pass to the customer until the products are paid for. This clause would prevent a 'package administration' from using parts supplied to the previous company. This protection may be essential to ensure a casualty in the supply chain does not have the 'domino effect' of forcing other companies into the same dilemma.

Sadly the UK Government seems reluctant to follow the EU leaders in offering any assistance to our industry in the form of short time working assistance.



Events - Bringing value back into your business

CBM has adopted a flexible approach to event planning this year which allows us to anticipate and react to immediate business needs. CBM recognises that it is very difficult for people to release themselves from the workplace. By convening events in association with other organisations CBM can provide a better spread of topics with higher value. All event details and updates on any changes are sent out regularly to members and posted on our website.

Building on the success of our February event, introducing the criteria for gaining approval to supply the defence and aerospace sectors, CBM ran a more detailed interactive event on 7th April developing the strategy for SC21 compliance. There is funding available in the West Midlands to help companies gain the accreditation and CBM is building a regional Cluster to access this. This SC21 initiative is being supported by TEC Transnational who has partnered the CBM to assist members. If you have missed out on the SC21 activities and want to know more email alan.arthur@britishmetalfforming.com.

On 22nd April CBM is co-hosting The Metalforming Technology Workshop in Telford. The event is free to CBM Members, subject to advanced registration. The one day workshop introduces modern technologies for rapid sheet forming, advanced lubrication, and innovative techniques. The event will be take place at Wolverhampton University Campus. Directions can be accessed through the CBM website or by email to alan.arthur@britishmetalfforming.com.

Looking forward to the coming weeks; CBM is joining with the British Stainless Steel Association (BSSA) to run a workshop on 9th June. This will highlight the requirement for and supply of stainless steel components in the manufacture of plant & equipment for renewable energy generation. For further information and registration details access the CBM website.

CBM is currently working on content and inviting speakers for a number of planned events. We are keen to run workshops on Energy management and Steel Prices. Details will follow.

International Conference

"New Developments in Forging Technology" 11 – 13 May, Germany
This International Conference gives a review of new developments in forging technology. Aim of this conference is to present the state-of-the-art in forging technology from a practical and scientific point of view. Furthermore market tendencies are displayed as well as future prospects on relevant manufacturing processes.

Conference Key Note: 'Future Market Developments Require Enhanced Competences'

Main Topics:

- Specific Items in Markets for Bulk Metal Forming Products
- Impact of novel CO₂ -Regulations on Process Chains of Forged Products
- Holistic Evaluation of Process Chains from Scientific and Research Point of View
- Developments of new Materials / Light Weight Construction Materials
- New Developments in Tool Design for Bulk Metal Forming
- State-of-the-Art of Numerical Process Simulation
- Implications of Forging Process Concepts on Forging Machine Design

The conference addresses to tool-, facility- and process design engineers in forging technology, R & D engineers from industry and universities as well as automotive procurement managers.

Experts from industry and universities will present papers on current industrial applications from a practical and theoretical point of view. Thus an adequate mix of theory, technical know-how and solutions will be provided.

For further information please visit: <http://www.ifu-stuttgart.de/>

Diary Dates

2009

May

11-13 International Conference 'New Developments in Forging Technology' – Germany - <http://www.ifu-stuttgart.de/>

June

8-10 'Fastener Tech' show - nr Chicago, USA
9-11 Subcon Show 2009 - NEC, Birmingham
9 9.00am CBM Workshop: New and renewable sources of energy
30 10.00am CBM Executive Board Meeting

July

7 10.30am CBM H, S & E meeting

September

17 CBM Workshop

October

8 CBM Workshop
14 10.30am Cold Rolled Sections Association [CRSA] AGM & Members' Meeting
15 10.00am CBM Executive Board Meeting
27-29 BLECH Polska

November

4 CBM Workshop
18-20 BLECH India
25 CBM Workshop

December

10 CBM Workshop

2010

June

9-11 MACH Exhibition, NEC Birmingham

All events are held at the CBM Headquarters, National Metalforming Centre, West Bromwich, B70 6PY, unless otherwise stated.

If any member is particularly interested in attending any of the above events, and is not sure of registration details, please contact CBM for further details on 0121 601 6350.