

Timothy Hunter is the president and CEO of McInnes Rolled Rings, a manufacturer of forged seamless rolled rings, headquartered in Erie, Pennsylvania, and one of the newest members of the Manufacturer & Business Association Board of Governors. Hunter recently spoke with the *Business Magazine* about his Board appointment and the state of manufacturing locally.



Tell us about your company.

Our company makes forged steel seamless rolled rings primarily for industrial bearing and gearing applications used in construction, mining, agriculture, aerospace, power generation and oil field equipment. Our plant on East 12th Street features the most advanced technology available utilizing a 63-ton Radial Axial Ring Rolling Machine equipped with a state-of-the-art computer-aided rolling system.



What role do you feel that manufacturing plays in our economy?

Manufacturing forms the foundation for our domestic economy. We continue to hear how critical the consumer will be to the recovery from the current recession. In order for the consumer to play this role, they need to have confidence that good family sustaining jobs are available. Manufacturing companies provide these types of jobs.

How would you describe the current state of manufacturing locally?

Local manufacturing businesses did see a better 2008 than the national economy. However, global financial markets froze during the fourth quarter of 2008 resulting in a severe liquidity crisis that very few, if any, manufacturing businesses can go through unscathed. The bright spot is that a lot of local manufacturers were coming off some very good years and balance sheets are much healthier heading into this slowdown than past recessions.

In your opinion, what are the major hurdles facing businesses today?

The global financial crisis has put a halt to most major financing activity that would tend to lead the world economy out of recession. We, or our customers, sell product throughout North America, Eastern and Western Europe and Asia. It's very slow everywhere. The "Wall Street" banking bailout needed to occur in order to unfreeze the system and get capital flowing again. Other external hurdles facing long-term business prospects will be the potential for more deficit spending, higher taxes, and a tendency to over-regulate businesses as a result of the events leading up to the financial crisis. Internal challenges will be the continuing need to transform our businesses, especially manufacturers, to a template where the work force is comprised of stakeholders who have a vested interest in success and productivity enhancement.

What are your thoughts on being appointed to the Board of Governors?

The Association has had a tremendous impact on local business and the community for over 100 years. It's an honor to be asked to serve with a group of Board members and staff who positively impact thousands of people in our community every year.

What do you hope to bring to the Board of Governors during your first term?

All any new Board member can do is lend a hand in helping the Association continue on its current successful track. I bring a small and mid-sized business perspective to the Board which is representative of a large cross-section of the Association. In addition, I'm coming off a three-year term on our North American Forging Industry Association Board, most recently serving as president; so, this has given me a broader perspective on issues facing business.

The Association recently introduced Blue Ocean Strategy and the Employers' Energy Alliance of Pennsylvania cooperative as its newest member services. Why should an Association member take advantage of these offerings?

These programs are just another example of the Association anticipating the needs of the business community and keeping members on the cutting edge of issues that will affect them. I would encourage any member to get more deeply involved in these services.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

I've been in manufacturing for almost 25 years and contrary to what many people see from the national media, manufacturing is alive and well. It's so easy to focus on the failures in any sector of the economy; however, deep within the manufacturing sector are entrepreneurs at work everyday developing businesses that will be the future backbone of our economy. The Association focuses on creating an environment that gives these people their best opportunity for success.

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 The Manufacturer & Business Association is dedicated to providing information and services to its members that will assist them in the pursuit of their business and community interests.
 — Board of Governors

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