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## **ODAM Networking Meeting: AI in Manufacturing & Distribution**



Learn about a variety of ways to improve your cash position using AI, from improving purchasing decisions, to optimizing daily operations.

Discover how **AI is being used right now** to improve purchasing decisions, streamline operations, and increase revenue in manufacturing and distribution.

**Where: Norco College – STEM Center**

**When: March 4, 2026 from 4pm to 5:30pm PST**

Register Now

# Calling all Manufacturers!

## Apply Now to the Manufacturing Innovation Awards

### Apply Before 4/15/2026

The Manufacturing Innovation Awards honor local manufacturers who are driving progress through smart solutions, creative strategies, and measurable results. Four outstanding manufacturers, located in the Inland Empire, will be honored under the award categories of:

- Resource or Process Innovation
- Product Innovation
- Human Capital/ Talent Innovation
- Marketing Innovation

#### HOW TO APPLY

- For details and application form, visit [www.MFGCouncilie.com/innovation-awards](http://www.MFGCouncilie.com/innovation-awards).
- Manufacturers or their supporters (bankers, suppliers, community partners), acting on their behalf, may apply.
- Manufacturer must have an operational plant in the Inland Empire (defined as San Bernardino and Riverside Counties).
- Application Deadline is April 15, 2026.



# **Manufacturing Modernization Assessments for Manufacturers - At No Cost**



The MCIE has secured funding to provide comprehensive manufacturing assessments to just 30 Inland Empire companies at no cost. Our technical experts will evaluate your operations and create customized modernization roadmaps to help guide your future planning. This is typically a \$5,000 to \$10,000 service.

The program includes a short pre-meeting to verify if this will be a good fit and two 3-hour on-site assessments, by technical experts, including energy efficiency analysis, workforce development strategy and training resources.

### **What You'll Get:**

- **Introductory Call:** Schedule a 15 or 30-minute introductory call. Open to all manufacturers. No cost. No obligation. No sales pitch.
- **On-Site Assessment:** Identify bottlenecks, waste, and automation opportunities in your plant at no cost.
- **Modernization Roadmap:** Improve productivity and throughput. Reduce operating and energy costs.

Contact us if you are a Riverside or San Bernardino County manufacturers with 10 or more employees. Contact Sandra Sisco at [ssisco@mfgcouncilie.com](mailto:ssisco@mfgcouncilie.com).

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS OPPORTUNITY VISIT:**

<https://mfgcouncilie.com/automation>

## **Attend the 2026 Manufacturing Innovation Awards Dinner**



**WHEN:** May 14, 2026

**WHERE:** DoubleTree Hotel, Ontario CA

**TIME:** Doors open at 3:30 PM

Drinks and appetizers with dinner to follow.

For Sponsorship Opportunities, contact Sandra at [SSisco@mfgcouncilie.com](mailto:SSisco@mfgcouncilie.com)

[Learn More](#)

## 🚀 Ready to Launch at MCIE's 2026 Charity Golf Event? 🚀

One of the most talked-about highlights on the course is back... **the Golf Cannon!**

At the **3rd Annual Manufacturing Charity Golf Event**, players will have the chance to step up, take aim, and launch their shot down the fairway with the Golf Cannon — adding energy, excitement, and a little friendly competition to an already incredible day on the green.



*This fan-favorite activity isn't just fun — it's part of a bigger mission.*

**When:** June 1, 2026

**Shotgun Start:** 8:30 AM

**Where:** Bear Valley Country Club, Victorville, CA

🔗 Register here: <https://mfgcouncilie.com/events>

**Why play?**

Every swing supports the future of our industry.

A portion of each registration directly funds student scholarships for careers in manufacturing through:

- Technical trade schools
- Apprenticeships
- Career pathway programs

This is more than a great day of golf — it's an opportunity to invest in the workforce that keeps manufacturing strong. Bring your team together, enjoy unforgettable on-course experiences like the Golf Cannon, and help fuel the next generation of talent.

Lock in your foursome and sponsorship package now.

**Secure your spot. Support students. Be part of something bigger than the game.**

For questions, contact Sarah Johnson at [sjohnson@mfgcouncilie.com](mailto:sjohnson@mfgcouncilie.com)

**Sponsors:**



## 2026 Industry Partners & Awards Breakfast

Norco College would like to cordially invite you to attend Norco College's 2026 Industry Partners & Awards Breakfast followed by our Career Education's Industry Advisory Meetings (breakout by industry) on March 13, 2026, from 7:30 AM – 10:30 AM.

One of the Career Education industry breakouts will be under their Manufacturing Technology programs. They want to hear from you!

**To RSVP, please click on the link and register today -**

**[Register Now](#)**

*Event page for more information:*

**WATCH OUR EVENTS PAGE FOR UPCOMING TOURS** [Events – MCIE](#)  
**LET US TOUR YOUR PLANT!** Contact Debbie at [dsmith@mfgcouncilie.com](mailto:dsmith@mfgcouncilie.com)

## Who on Your Manufacturing Team Should Get Certified?



Modern manufacturing runs on automation, but automation runs on people. When mechanized processes goes wrong, the costs of down-time can be prohibitive The manufacturing team of today is more like the pit crew of an F1 racer than ever before.

Industry estimates routinely place the cost of unplanned downtime in the tens of thousands of dollars per hour for traditional manufacturers — and significantly higher in highly automated facilities. In large-scale automated operations, losses can escalate into the hundreds of thousands of dollars per hour when throughput stops.

[Read More](#)

## NAM State of Manufacturing: “The Rocket Is Fueled—Clear the Skies”

In his 2026 State of Manufacturing address, National Association of Manufacturers President and CEO Jay Timmons delivered a message manufacturers understand well:

**The industry is ready to grow—but long-term investment depends on policy certainty.**

Speaking in Cleveland, Timmons emphasized that manufacturers have the capital, technology and appetite to expand. But volatility—rising input costs, shifting trade dynamics, health care expenses and regulatory uncertainty—continues to complicate planning.

[Read More](#)



## Donate Now for Scholarships

The Manufacturers' Council, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is asking for your support to help fund scholarships for students pursuing industry certifications in manufacturing and technical trades. Your donation equips local talent with the skills employers urgently need, strengthens the regional workforce, and creates life-changing career opportunities.

A contribution today delivers immediate impact—helping students succeed and ensuring a stronger future for Inland Empire manufacturing.

[Donate Now](#)

## Ready to make a difference?

**Join the Manufacturers' Council – Be Part of the Movement Shaping the Future of Manufacturing in the Inland Empire**

Become a Member Today at <https://mfgcouncilie.com/membership>

Since 2005, the Manufacturers' Council of the Inland Empire (MCIE) has supported a thriving manufacturing economy by securing over \$50 million in workforce training, production innovation, and industry growth.

With nearly 95,000 manufacturing jobs in our region and continued growth projected in 2026, MCIE is committed to building a skilled, sustainable workforce and shifting public perception about the importance of manufacturing in our community.

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, MCIE connects manufacturers with education, workforce programs, and regional resources, while promoting career pathways for the next generation of talent. Now is the time to get involved. Become a member and help drive real impact.

[\*\*READ MORE\*\*](#)

## Sponsorship Opportunities

As you begin planning your 2026 marketing and community engagement budgets, we invite you to consider partnering with us as a **Yearly Sponsor** for our upcoming events and initiatives for the year.

The MCIE is proud to host a variety of impactful events that bring together business leaders, community members, and changemakers across the region. Sponsorship provides a unique opportunity to:

- Build brand awareness
- Connect with targeted audiences
- Align with meaningful causes and business development efforts
- Gain year-round visibility across digital and in-person platforms

**Upcoming 2026 Opportunities Include: Visit the MCIE events page here for all events.**

[\*\*Events – MCIE\*\*](#)

Included are sponsorship packages to fit a range of goals and budgets—including early visibility opportunities for companies who commit now.

For questions and to move forward with sponsorship, please contact Sarah Johnson, Events Operations Director at [sjohnson@mfgcouncilie.com](mailto:sjohnson@mfgcouncilie.com) | (253) 880-2333

Thank you for your continued support of our mission—we look forward to collaborating with you in the year ahead.

## Economy and Regulations:

- (Feb 11) – In January, the US economy added 130,000 jobs. The unemployment rate declined to 4.3% from 4.4% the month prior. Job gains occurred in Construction, Healthcare, Social Assistance. Job losses occurred in Financial Services and Federal Government with other sectors remaining more or less steady. (*Bureau of Labor Statistics*)
- (Feb 18) – The Federal Open Markets Committee met on January 28 and agreed that inflation’s approach to 2% normal levels could be slow and uneven, leaving the Federal Overnight Rate in the targeted range to between 3.5% and 3.75%. The next meeting is to occur in March, with many experts predicting rates may remain at current levels for the near future. CPI inflation declined in January to 2.4% from 2.7% at the end the year at 2.7% according to Bureau of Labor Statistics. (*Federal Reserve, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Financial Times*)



Have a profitable March!

Molly

Molly Burgess

Executive Director

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