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News

Economic challenges are on the agenda

12 April 2009



MANUFACTURERS are facing global threats from the economic downturn and cannot tolerate poor-performing suppliers that add avoidable risk to their supply chain, according to Dr Peter Campbell, Improvement Manager, Volgren, Australia.

Dr Campbell is one of more than 70 leading local and international speakers preparing to take part in Smart 2009 Conference, which will tackle the major issues facing supply chains in a time of increasing economic uncertainty.

In response to the downturn, Dr Campbell said manufacturers are actively seeking partnerships with suppliers that demonstrate the innovation and adaptation necessary to survive and thrive in the long term. <[q]>
"Suppliers that are heavily reliant on industries highly correlated to the prevailing economic conditions are now seeking to broaden their consumer base and diversify some of their exposure.



"We are certainly seeing this in the bus industry with suppliers seeking to align themselves with Volgren as our volumes rapidly expand in contrast to other companies and sectors," he said.

Kicking off the manufacturing logistics and advanced improvement methodologies stream at smart 2009, DR Campbell will explore the business strategies of Lean Manufacturing and Six Sigma.

"Both approaches offer considerable benefits. The potential impact of rational thought

processes and problem solving, however guised, cannot be understated," Dr Campbell said.

Also headlining the manufacturing logistics stream will be Jason Furness, GM, Electrolux Home Products, Australia.

In a 'warts and all' fashion, Furness will argue that the theory of constraints and lean manufacturing are highly complementary technologies that can help businesses succeed despite the current economic pressures.

Another presentation sure to attract manufacturers' interest will be Paul Stanley's examination of lean supply chains in the global automotive aftermarket. GM Commercial Operations at Unipart, Australia, Stanley will discuss how Unipart has applied lean thinking tools to a global automotive aftermarket supply chain, resulting in performance, efficiency and productivity benefits.

Smart 2009 will feature ten special interest streams, including global supply chains, procurement and SC strategies, manufacturing logistics and advanced improvement methodologies, UEA guest nation, the human factor, rail and intermodal, warehousing and operations, FMCG and retail supply chains, supply chain management and strategic planning, and infrastructure.

Smart 2009 will take place at Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre, 10-11 June. To register or for further information visit www.smartconference.com.au.

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