

Tech Center News

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Defense Suppliers Gather to Network And Discuss News

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Lidia Gulawsky, contract administrator at North American Controls in Shelby Township, has been coming to NDIA events for a couple of years.

“I like coming to events like this because here we get networking opportunities and the chance to see videos of vehicles that we supplied parts to,” Gulawsky said.

“It’s nice to see a complete vehicle that’s been put together. Many people here are subcontractors that supply parts to a military vehicle, but we never see the whole thing up and running.”

Gulawsky added that it’s also nice to talk to people to get their perspectives on what’s going on in the defense world.

“Everyone here has a different spin on what’s going on in the industry and it’s good to hear different points of view,” she said. “Many of us are subcontractors and this also gives us a chance to meet with larger contractors and get their ‘big picture’ point of view. It’s good anytime you have the opportunity to meet with others in the industry and can get a fresh perspective on things.

“We’re seeing if others in the industry are feeling the pain of the current congressional impasse. But we feel every challenge presents opportunities – and we’re optimists.”

Loerch spoke to the crowd and said that with sequestration, it’s good that members of the government and private industry can get together and talk. She noted that the NDIA’s membership isn’t just made up of people from the private sector. Many members are from the government. Being able to get together and talk in an informal atmosphere helps everyone, she said.

The mixer has proven so popular that the NDIA Michigan Chapter is planning to hold more events so its members can get together and talk, Loerch said.

The next event is April 5 and it’s the ROTC Awards Banquet, which will be held in the Dearborn Inn. There will also be the Michigan Defense Expo, which will be held in the Macomb Community College Sports & Expo Center on May 14-15.

Cadillac Finds Way to Make Vehicle Technology Personal

Cadillac is using its CUE in-vehicle system to allow drivers to personalize their car’s technology settings.

The CUE in-vehicle user system allows drivers to customize setting and create their own advanced features that enable user-created shortcuts to their favorite infotainment features.

This customization ability extends to the navigation system. Most systems prompt users to insert destination information by separately inputting state, city, street, and house number information. CUE users can manually or verbally input the entire destination address on one screen.

The goal, GM officials say, is to save time and keep drivers focused on the road. In some cases, CUE will take partial information and automatically fill in city and state information.

CUE also offers “presets” of frequently visited destinations similar to radio station presets. CUE

will support access of destinations and phone numbers without having to separately launch the vehicle’s navigation system or phone book. These presets live along the bottom row of all CUE screens, allowing for instant access, regardless of which application is being used.

To offset security concerns, engineers equipped CUE with a “Valet Mode,” which blocks access to all center stack and instrument panel functions, as well as the storage bin behind the center stack.

“Drivers had reservations about their personal information, such as addresses or stored phone numbers, being accessed by a valet attendant, for example, or in case of theft,” said Cody Hansen, CUE interaction designer. “With ‘Valet Mode,’ users can enter a four-digit pin and lock access to the center stack, steering wheel controls, and the storage cubby behind the center stack.”

Leno Drives TARDEC’s Alpha Combat

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it with our stakeholders such as program managers and OEMs like Lockheed or General Dynamics. We call it technology transfer.”

The information can be used for the development of new vehicles in future projects, Agusti said. The Alpha has a conventional train. It uses a Cummins Diesel engine and TARDEC was able to get a 70 percent improvement in fuel efficiency over the baseline numbers.

“We were aiming for a 30 percent improvement,” Agusti said. “That was back in 2008.”

Agusti said she has test-driven the Alpha herself several times, including driving the vehicle around the Pentagon and parking it. The Alpha was taken to California as part of an effort to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education as well as for recruiting.

“On that trip, we visited several high schools and a couple of

colleges,” Agusti said. “The idea was to promote STEM education and recruitment. We also took it to a ‘cars and coffee’ show.”

She said Leno had heard about the trip and asked to test-drive it. So they took the Alpha to Leno’s private garage where he keeps his vast collection of high-performance and antique automobiles.

“I got to meet Jay Leno,” Agusti said. “He really knows his stuff when it comes to motor vehicles. He was excited about taking the Alpha for a test drive and he was so nice. He gave us a tour of his garage.”

All of Leno’s vehicles, many of which are antiques, have their keys in the ignitions, Agusti said, because all the engines work and need to be turned over from time to time to keep the engines in performing condition.

“If I had to pick a favorite vehicle from his collection, I would have to say it was one of his Bugattis. It was just such an impressive car and the one I saw was worth \$2 million.”

CUE also offers some of what GM called the industry’s most advanced audio features and connectivity options. Up to 10 different media devices could be paired at one time via Bluetooth. To help manage all those playlists, CUE’s media library aggregates all the playlists to make finding specific songs easier.

Integration of CUE’s main functions into the steering controls and a separate screen in the instrument cluster allows access to radio and navigation functions at the same time.

GM compared this to multitasking on two separate comput-

er monitors at home or office.

Beyond playlists, users can fully customize and save radio tone settings for a personalized music listening experience. Most vehicles come with predetermined sound settings for certain music genres such as rock, jazz and talk.

CUE allows users to save their own settings by adjusting the bass, treble, balance and fade to desired levels. GM has created and named custom genres such as “Baby Mode,” where the fade and bass can be turned down so as not to wake a sleeping child in the backseat.

MCC Partners with Macomb County To Attract and Retain Businesses

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to address the certain needs of employers.

“What we have seen is that we’ve been working together very effectively,” said Ekanger. “The college plays a key role by helping develop programs to address employers’ needs.”

Ekanger says that 4M is constantly asking how to assist in the attraction and retention of businesses and how to connect that to education and training.

One way the organization is able to assist is through grants received at the state and local levels.

“We’re able to build programs that employees need,” he said. “MCC is a resource to help meet employers’ needs and ensure the skill sets of employees meet

the needs of the employers. It’s not only education and training.”

The size of the company doesn’t matter – small, medium, large – the goal is to help companies in Macomb County be successful.

“We know what each partner brings to the table so we’re really able to steer companies in the right direction and meet their individual needs,” said Ekanger.

According to a press release by the Macomb County Planning and Economic Development Department, the college’s “excellent entrepreneurial training programs have been instrumental in helping businesses establish a strong foundation.”

MCC was one of five organizations recognized during the Macomb Business Awards.

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