

FM World survey suggests economy is driving innovation

The latest Think Tank poll conducted by FM World, the online magazine of the British Institute of Facilities Management, has revealed that innovation is driving change even where there is no formal process for its implementation.

44% of those surveyed said that they were under no direct pressure to innovate, with only 6% stating that their organisations operated a programme to reward the introduction of new ideas. However, over half reported that they were under a great amount of pressure to cut costs which has in itself driven innovation.

"I do everything I can to both engender a culture where innovation is welcomed and where good practice is rewarded," one contributor told the Think Tank poll, adding that a shared savings scheme would make an attractive incentive for all parties. "FM providers need to take responsibility for effective innovation or otherwise face being further marginalised from the customer's decision making process," another contributor said, "providers must understand that innovation isn't about self-interest or

improving only their own margins. Instead, it's about delivering mutual consistent benefits to stakeholders."



Sensor-powered thermostats could help save energy

Smart Planet has reported that Americans are using less energy for heating but are still failing to conserve energy across the board because of increased consumption by flat-screen TVs, computers, smartphones and appliances.

According to the US Energy Information Administration, Americans have burned around 10% less energy to heat and cool their homes over the last couple of decades but during that same period the amount of energy consumed for appliances, electronics and lighting has grown by around 10%.

Web-enabled, sensor-powered thermostats may be able to make the difference. These futuristic devices 'learn' the temperature preferences of the user

and can be controlled remotely via a smartphone or computer.

Of course, capitalising on the intelligence of these devices relies on the intelligence of us, the users. Alan Meier, senior scientist in the Building Technology and Urban Systems Department at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, says, "There is a big question about whether consumers will persist in using any of these wonderfully convenient devices." Meier was part of a study that found around half of participants do not even use the programming features currently provided by existing thermostats, which are designed to conserve energy when occupants are sleeping or away from home.



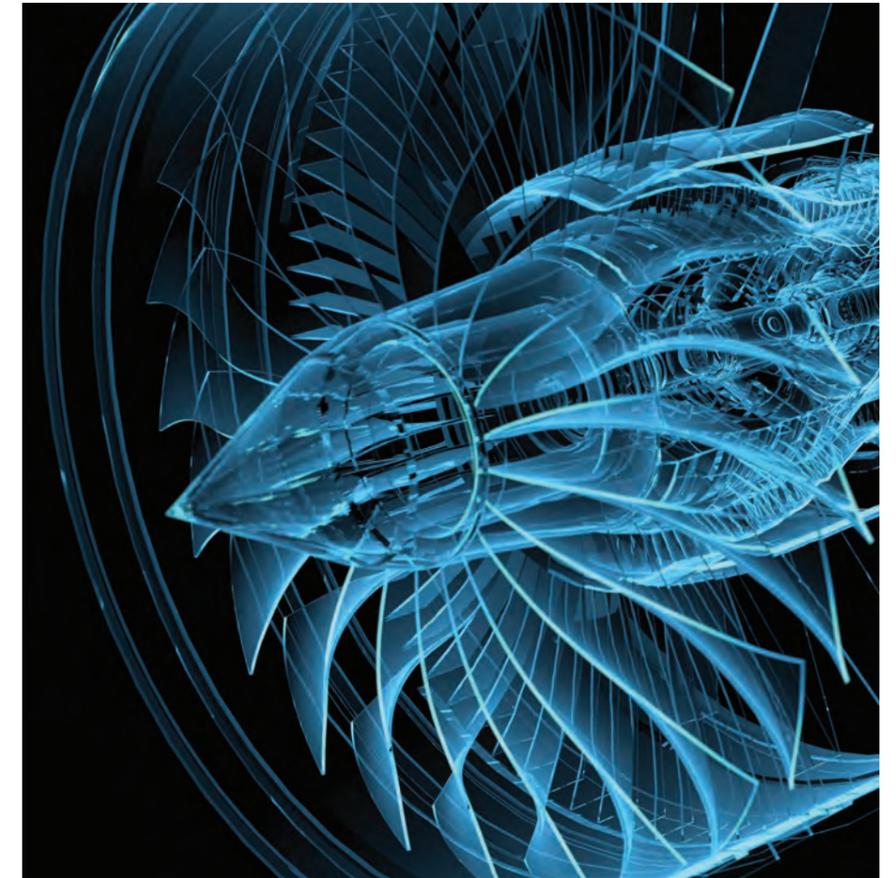
ERIKS inks major MRO deal with Mettis Aerospace

Mettis Aerospace, a leading global manufacturer of precision forged and machined components has appointed ERIKS for an on-going MRO (maintenance, repair and operations) contract.

Mettis Aerospace has been working in partnership with ERIKS for many years, but the signing of this new contract marks a new era with the establishment of a long-term technical and supply chain collaboration.

"We have to act fast when maintenance issues arise to avoid downtime," explained Lawrence Jenkins, COO, Mettis Aerospace. "With ERIKS we can be sure we have a partner who is holding the right stocks for us. We've already established an excellent working relationship with ERIKS and we now want to formalise that relationship into what we feel will develop into a true working partnership."

Mettis Aerospace specialises in the manufacture of precision-forged and machined components in titanium, aluminium and special steels. Its fully integrated operational facility incorporates design engineering for manufacture, forging operations, heat treatment facilities, testing and laboratory facilities, and a machining centre, plus processing, kitting and logistics facilities.



Chinese space station moves a step closer



The successful launch of the Shenzhou-10 manned spacecraft in June, celebrated by President Xi Jinping's 'space dream' speech, has brought the prospect of a permanent Chinese space station a step closer.

"The mission's members carry a space dream of the Chinese nation, and represent the lofty aspirations of the Chinese people to explore space," said Mr Xi as his countrymen headed for space lab Tiangong-1 on the country's longest-ever mission.

The local Xinhua news agency calls China's space dream 'humble' and peaceful and emphasises that, "After the year 2020, China's future space station will probably

be the only one of any kind in service considering the International Space Station's retirement plan".

By then, China's space dream, "will not only serve its own people but also contribute to space exploration for the human race", the agency says.

The proposed space station is expected to have a mass of about 60 tonnes and comprise a number of interlocking modules. Like the International Space Station, it will be capable of accommodating residents for long periods and be supplied by robotic freighters.

