



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 20, 2015

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**SOUTHERN AUTOMOTIVE CONFERENCE SET FOR OCT. 18-20 IN NASHVILLE**  
*Tennessee Automotive Manufacturers Association to convene the region's top automotive manufacturers*

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** – The Tennessee Automotive Manufacturers Association (TAMA) will host the 2015 Southern Automotive Conference (SAC), the region's premier automotive tradeshow, Oct. 18-20 in the heart of downtown Nashville.

The SAC provides a forum for top executives from original automotive manufacturers (OEMs) and major suppliers to showcase new product developments, collaborate on best practices and discuss strategies to strengthen the region's burgeoning automotive industry. This year's conference theme, "Made in the South," represents how the southeastern United States is applying its traditional carmaking expertise towards the future of manufacturing.

Located within a short distance of some of the region's top automotive companies, Nashville is a natural fit to host the SAC, which annually rotates between Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi. The conference, now in its eighth year, is projected to welcome more than 150 exhibitors and more than 1,000 attendees, easily making it the biggest SAC to date.

"Tennessee has established itself as the heart of the Southern automotive industry, and we are thrilled to serve as the host state for this year's SAC," Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Randy Boyd said. "Home to three OEMs and more than 1,000 suppliers, Tennessee's automotive industry is thriving. We have a lot of work to do to remain on top, and we look forward to engaging automotive executives from across the region in an important conversation about best practices, workforce needs and other topics."

Known for its world-class automotive production and sound business environment, the southeast United States boasts the fastest growing automotive industry in North America. It is home to more than 16 OEM plants and thousands of suppliers and its automotive industry is one of the largest employers in the South, and a major driver of the region's economy. New plants and site expansions are announced regularly, totaling billions in new investments.

TAMA is organizing the event alongside SAC partner organizations from Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia and South Carolina. The conference offers numerous networking opportunities, allowing attendees to interact face-to-face with potential clients and new business contacts from across the Southeast. Convening the SAC in one of the country's "red hot" cities also allows attendees ample pre- and post-conference opportunities to socialize.

"We are excited to host this year's conference in Music City," said TAMA President Rick Youngblood. "Tennessee has a booming manufacturing industry, and Nashville leadership keeps improving the city to make downtown an even more attractive destination for tourists and businesses alike. Nashville is the perfect place to host our annual conference, which is full of new, engaging features."



Highlights of the SAC's three-day program include:

- Executives from Nissan, Volkswagen, General Motors, Toyota, Mercedes-Benz, Kia, Honda on the annual OEM panel, which offers an opportunity to highlight new innovations and discuss future trends within the industry.
- STEM-centric sessions developed to inform secondary and post-secondary education administrators about the ever-evolving automotive manufacturing jobs of the future and the need to further incorporate STEM education into traditional curriculum.
- A new award designed to recognize factory workers in the automotive industry called the “Stars of Southern Manufacturing.” The award will honor recipients who exemplify the best of corporate culture at Southern OEMs and top supplier companies.
- Distinguished speakers including and Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam.
- Speakers from Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Clemson University’s Center for Automotive Research, Mississippi State University’s Center for Advanced Vehicular Systems, Auburn University, Georgia Tech, J.D. Power, Battelle for Kids and many other nationally-renowned organizations.
- An exhibit hall featuring more than 150 exhibitors, several vehicle displays and Tennessee Tech University’s STEM Mobile Unit, which attendees will be able to tour. It will be open to conference attendees throughout the duration of the event.
- Plenary and breakout panel sessions centering on three tracks: innovation, collaboration and workforce development.

To learn more about the Southern Automotive Conference, visit the event’s official [website](#), or follow it on Twitter and Instagram @Southern\_Autos. Companies and individuals interested in exhibiting or attending may [register here](#).

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