

# BUSINESS

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## A united front

### Small companies banding together to attract business

By Howard French

Journal Inquirer

Connecticut's smaller aerospace companies are banding together to appeal to major aerospace companies like East Hartford-based Pratt & Whitney, Hamilton Sundstrand in Windsor Locks, and Fairfield-based General Electric to consider them before subcontracting work offshore.

"Aircraft system manufacturers no longer have to look overseas to reduce the cost of components for their jets, helicopters, and engines," Aerospace Components Manufacturers President L. Stephen Prout said in a statement.

"Now they can look to Connecticut and a consortium of companies that can lower total cost of procurement, even when compared with lower cost labor markets elsewhere," Prout said.

An outgrowth of Connecticut's Department of Economic & Community Development Industry Cluster Initiative, the ACM group was to show off its members' products at an exhibition today, according to Prout. More than three dozen

*ACM is an  
outgrowth  
of a state agency.*

Connecticut aerospace companies were to be represented at the exhibition at the Hartford-Windsor Airport Marriott Hotel, in Windsor, he said.

"Manufacturers of aircraft engines, airframes, and aircraft systems now can consolidate purchase of components, kits, or sub-assemblies through ACM members who provide services not otherwise available through a single purchase order," Prout said.

"Our new way of doing business works something like a 'general contractor' with an ACM Procurement Leader serving as the contract manager as well as manufacturer or assembler of a portion of the job," he added.

"The leader also takes responsibility for obtaining the best possible

price from all ACM participants," Prout said.

"There is no longer any reason for an aircraft or engine manufacturer to spend valuable resources issuing separate purchase orders and then dealing with inventories of tens, hundreds, or even thousands of individual parts for a particular assembly," Prout said.

"ACM members will make the components, provide the support processes, and, optionally, assemble them into kits and deliver them where and when they are required — all with a single purchase order," he added.

"The exhibition also is an opportunity for both customers and government officials to learn about the capabilities of individual ACM members as well as ACM programs to help its members remain competitive in the global marketplace," Prout said.

ACM bills itself as a nonprofit network of more than 40 independent Connecticut-based small- to mid-sized companies that do subcontracting work for the aerospace industry with a variety of parts and services.