

**In the
Final
Analysis**

“So, this meeting has got to be a record, right?”

— *Most Common Question that I Fielded at TMS 2012*

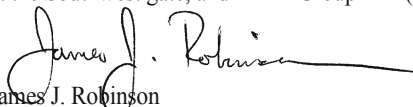
I write this dispatch from Gate 128 of the Orlando International Airport, having completed a 175 hour stint at Walt Disney World’s Swan and Dolphin Hotel and Convention Center in support of a little affair called the TMS 2012 Annual Meeting and Exhibition. The week is a pastel-colored blur of that-went-better-than-I-expected, that-went-about-as-well-as-I-expected, I-didn’t-see-that-coming, and gee-I-wish-that-went-better moments. Happily, the good-to-great moments significantly outnumbered the “eh” moments, so I’m feeling pretty good about things, which nicely leavens my general exhaustion.

I know that our editorial team has a complete round-up of the meeting planned for the June *JOM*, but I thought that I’d give you my early take on the event as processed through my filter as deputy executive director—acting as the designated ringleader for this event is one of my primary job responsibilities, and I spend a lot of time engaging at all strata of this defining TMS conference.

So, in no particular order, here are a few things that pop into mind when I consider a sleep-deprived week:

- Great job by everyone—society staff who coordinated the affair, the volunteers who developed all of the content and ran the functions, the members who turned out, the nonmembers who came and became members, the students who showed up in record numbers, and the service providers who handled thousands of details. We were, essentially, a small city for a week; TMS Town is a pretty good place to be.
- The event was the society’s best attended since 1998, with 4,339 total attendees.
- We had the greatest number of presentations ever, with nearly 4,000 papers submitted and around 3,500 being presented; about 500 of the presentations were posters.
- The program book finally achieved such mass that it collapsed in on itself and formed a black hole. For the safety of future meeting attendees, the society will no longer print an Annual Meeting and Exhibition program containing abstracts.
- The TMS Board of Directors approved the details of a new strategic plan—TMS 2015. The five goals are (1) Enhance our status as a volunteer-centric society. . . . (2) Be the destination society for young professionals: technically, professionally and socially. . . . (3) Sustain and grow our core as The Minerals, Metals & Materials Society. . . . (4) Advance materials solutions for energy and environmental challenges. . . . (5) Be the recognized home for and advocate of materials and manufacturing innovation. I think that you’ll find the associated tactics to be extremely engaging.
- We debuted a robust smart phone “app” having the complete technical program, calendar of events, and exhibition guide embedded within it. The positive response, especially from young attendees, was quite remarkable. Look for version 2.0 in 2013 to be even better.
- The Materials and Society Committee is planning a unique event for TMS 2013. They are going to organize an information/networking function for all TMS technical committee leaders to convene and outline what “energy” means to their committee, what activities they have planned in energy going forward, and how they might better collaborate, avoiding duplication and building synergies. I think this could be *very* interesting to witness.

I could share more, like Colorado School of Mines winning the Alcoa TMS Materials Bowl yet again, Wiley hosting nifty book signings with TMS authors, the neat premiums at the TMS Foundation booth (iPad, anyone?), and a notable side event called the TMS Materials/Manufacturing Leaders Summit, but those are fodder for future columns and it is boarding time at the Southwest gate, and I’m in Group “A” (hooray!). Gotta fly.


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