



The Parting Shot Jack Champaigne

Paris and Patents

Shot peening and Paris. At first thought these words have no relationship at all: One is the international city in the heart of Europe and the other is, well, what is it? Everyone in the world knows Paris, the Eiffel tower and the Arc de triumph. Shot peening, on the other hand, doesn't have an image at all—it's the funny words for a process that you have to explain to family and friends. However different, from September 6th to the 9th, the two came together for the Ninth International Conference on Shot Peening.

Paris is the city of lights. It's one of the most beautiful cities in the world and it's wrapped in history and culture. For centuries, artists, engineers, teachers and brilliant thinkers have converged on this city to share their ideas. By doing so, they would open themselves up to criticism and challenges. These ideas, often thought of as radical at their inception, eventually became accepted as others began to appreciate their merits.

Our recent International Conference on Shot Peening is no different. Some of the greatest minds in this industry came to Paris for the same thing— to share their ideas with their colleagues and the rest of the world. There were 69 papers dedicated to shot peening, alternative surface treatments, stress, fatigue and even peening with light (lasers). What struck me the most was the diversity of topics and the energetic discussions on the data presented. This was a continuing example of great minds pushing great minds to bring out the best in all who attended.

Many of these ideas shared in Paris are the result of years of work. Authors and researchers traveled great distances at great expense to share these findings in the spirit of education and innovation and in hopes of attaining international acceptance of their efforts.

Many companies and individuals in our industry, like the delegates at the conference, work hard to create and develop innovative technologies, ideas and processes. These efforts, whether in the international community or in a small factory, are often rewarded in the marketplace. To help encourage this perpetuation of progress there are times that protection from imitators is sought in patent protection, thus assuring that those that did the work will reap the rewards.

The article on patents is our effort to help our readers better understand the protection of intellectual property. The primary purpose of the patent system is to disseminate knowledge. To encourage the sharing of this knowledge, a government will award a patent that will prevent others from making, using or selling your ideas without compensating you for your efforts.

While "imitation is the most sincere form of flattery," we encourage all of our readers to learn more about patents. The process to obtain a patent is not as formidable as you may think. And while a patent may be necessary to keep a competitor from stealing your invention, it also gives us the incentive to share.

Paris photography is courtesy of Marsha Tufft with GE Transportation Aircraft Engines