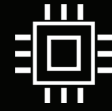


AUTOMOTIVE SURFACES

2026



October 8, 2026 MSU Management
Education Center
Troy, Michigan, USA

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Automotive Surfaces 2026 Agenda

7:30 a.m. Registration, Networking, and Continental Breakfast

8:30 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks
Darren Nowak, Director, Research & Analysis
The ITB Group

The Occupant

8:40 a.m. **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**
When Nothing is Certain, Everything is Possible: Purposeful Innovation and People-Focused Design
Jillian Cooper, Senior Director Marketing, Design and Supplier Diversity, and Benjamin Louis, Design Studio Manager
FORVIA
This keynote explores the future of mobility and automotive design in a world shaped by volatility, technological disruption, and fast-changing consumer expectations. With North America as the primary focus, FORVIA shares how its designers work as “professional empathists,” creating sustainable, affordable, and human-centered mobility by turning purposeful innovation into emotionally engaging experiences.

9:15 a.m. **From Surface to Experience: Transforming Vehicle Interiors Through Intelligent Comfort Technologies**
Dr. Nicola Gerrett, Senior Director Research and Medical
Gentherm
Automotive interiors are evolving from passive surfaces into intelligent interfaces that shape how occupants experience the vehicle. This presentation explores Gentherm’s WellSense platform, which combines human physiology research with heating, cooling, pneumatic massage, and other sensory technologies. Orchestrated into curated, science-based experiences, these systems turn static touchpoints into dynamic platforms for comfort, recovery, and well-being.

9:40 a.m. **Integrating Lighting, HMI and Surfaces: Where UX Meets Industrial Reality**
Dr. Daniel Pardo, Director of Tech Solutions, North America and Global Strategy
Antolin
Treating lighting, interior surfaces, and HMI as one system places user experience at the heart of interior development from the start. Early collaboration across design, HMI, engineering, and Tier 1 suppliers produces intuitive solutions that are easier to industrialize, more robust in quality, and more cost-efficient. The approach delivers scalable concepts that balance user expectations against manufacturing reality.

10:00 a.m. Coffee and Conversations Break

10:40 a.m. **SPECIAL FEATURE**
How do we Create Premium Customer Experiences in Interiors that are Desirable and Economically Viable in a Rapidly Changing Industry?
Stella Brochado, Global Executive, Product Engineering
General Motors

Light and Display

11:10 a.m. **Functional Safety and Signal Integrity Integration for Smart Glazing**
Abdul Salam Abdul Karim, ADAS Platform Systems Hardware Engineer

Ford Motor Company

As vehicles move toward software-defined and highly automated architectures, smart glazing becomes a platform for head-up displays, cameras, sensors, and coated windshields. This presentation examines the functional safety, signal integrity, and system integration challenges involved, with design considerations for electromagnetic compatibility, high-speed communication, diagnostics, and reliability that support robust ADAS operation.

11:40 a.m. **Reimagining the Digital Cockpit with Advanced Display Solutions**

Jaden Ji, Global Product Manager Display

Marelli Electronics

Cockpit touchpoint innovations including Marelli’s Cockpit Fusion Module, HorizonView 2.0 PHUD and MiniLED TFT ProDisplay will be discussed. Highlights on how Marelli is leveraging centralized architecture, advanced display technologies, local development in China and MVP-based execution to accelerate innovation from concept to prototype in just 90 days will be presented.

12:00 p.m. **Advancing Automotive Exteriors and Interiors through Efficient Integration**

Josh Wagner, Application Development Engineer

Covestro

This presentation covers recent advances in polycarbonate solutions for automotive exteriors and interiors. Engineered grades deliver two to six times current market performance for lenses that read black and monolithic under ambient light while achieving compliant red illumination on activation. A thin curved light bar is also discussed, with processing strategies for molding large, sweeping geometries.

12:20 p.m. Lunch

Out of the Mold

1:20 p.m. **Reimagining Exterior Finishes with In-Mold Films**
Jim Pillars, Engineering Technical Leader, BGFT

General Motors

Reimagining exterior finishes with alternatives such as in-mold films is changing how automotive exteriors are designed and manufactured, enabling premium aesthetics without the capital investment that chrome and paint lines demand. The approach expands the Tier 1 supply base, reduces environmental impact, and carries real potential for cost savings.

Exhibitors To-date:

 Covestro  Dexerials  Myant

1:35 p.m. The Artistic Active Aero Rear Spoiler on Cadillac Celestiq
Seona Lee, Technical Specialist, Rear Trim (Exterior)
General Motors
The Cadillac Celestiq active aero spoiler shows that artistically desirable finishes can be executed on a moving exterior component, using a material choice unusual for the application. It delivers five positions within very thin packaging space, achieves a clean B-side appearance, and meets full performance requirements using two metal tubes bonded inside.

1:50 p.m. Next-Generation Automotive Surfaces: An Integrated Alternative to Conventional Paint Lines
Florian Rammer, Business Development Manager, Automotive & Mobility
ENGEL Machinery
Stefano Andreolli, Sales and Marketing Manager
CANNON Group
Manufacturers are seeking new ways to produce premium, durable Class A surfaces while cutting the cost, energy demand, and complexity of conventional painting. ENGEL's clearmelt technology combines thermoplastic injection molding with reactive polyurethane coating inside the mold, producing scratch-resistant, self-healing surfaces with no downstream painting or polishing. Recent advances include color changes in under six minutes and integrated automation cells.

2:10 p.m. Advantages of Injection Molding Behind Thin Film TPO
Tom Sybrandy, Interiors Team Lead, Advanced Development
Inteva Products
Injection molding behind thin film TPO is a single-step process combining the performance and tactile benefits of a TPO-clad component with the efficiency of injection molding. It eliminates secondary operations such as painting or post-mold cladding. This presentation examines processing approaches, key design considerations, and how the method expands material and design options for interior trim.

2:30 p.m. Coffee and Conversations Break

Smart Surfaces

2:55 p.m. Novel HMI Design: Square Control with Closed Surface
Octavio Perez, Design Release Engineer
Preh
Preh introduces a control element with zero moving parts and a closed surface, operated intuitively through haptic and visual feedback. Placed on the center console, the square control accepts a wide range of finishes, including glass, ceramic, metal, plastic, and decorative films such as carbon or wood, combined with transparency and illumination effects.

3:15 p.m. Textile-Computing as a Multifunctional Automotive Surface Platform
Dr. Patrick Morkus, Business Development Manager
Myant X
As the cabin evolves into a wellness and intelligence space, textile-computing offers a surface platform delivering multiple functions where occupants live and interact. Applications include thermal comfort across

seats, door panels, and armrests, plus occupancy and pressure sensing. A conformal conductive textile layer replaces bulky harnesses, and ECG sensing in the steering wheel opens new ground in driver wellness.

Craft and Decoration

3:35 p.m. New Potential of Surface Decoration Using Digital Print Methods on Door and Dashboard Trims
Thomas Wagner, Global Director, Automotive BU
TIGER Coatings
Digital printing opens new possibilities for high-value decoration on interior door and dashboard trims. TIGER's TIGITAL Inks setup enables precise, durable decoration on plastic and metal. A 2 1/2-D printing method replicates both the appearance and the haptic texture of materials such as marble or wood, offering a cost-efficient alternative that removes complex lamination steps.

3:55 p.m. SPECIAL FEATURE
Where Craftsmanship Meets Innovation
Chaired by Robert Taylor, Global Material Performance and Grain Technical Specialist
Ford Motor Company
The world's best products begin with exceptional tooling. This interactive session explores the evolving technologies, techniques, and challenges behind injection mold construction, precision mold graining, and advanced skin and foam tooling.

Where Surface Design Comes to Life
Terry Comte, Manager of Sales
CST Studio
Enter the world of automotive texturing, where craftsmanship, engineering, and advanced technology merge to shape the surfaces drivers and passengers see and touch every day. This presentation explores emerging trends, innovative texturing techniques, and the collaborative developments powering the next generation of interior design, where aesthetics, functionality, and precision are engineered into every surface.

Engineering the Foundation of Premium Interiors
Val Grinberg, Vice President
Standex (GS Engineering)
From IMGL and IMGS tooling to skin and foam systems, the complexity behind today's automotive interiors begins long before production. A proactive focus on design for manufacturing, while staying faithful to design intent, enables success at start of production. This presentation examines the engineering principles, tooling strategies, and manufacturing innovations behind consistent quality and efficient launches.

Precision Tooling, Proven Performance
Michael Brouillette, Global Sales
Integrity Tool and Mold
Injection molds are the foundation of every successful plastic component. This talk examines the technologies, engineering expertise, and manufacturing practices that turn design concepts into production tooling, delivering the accuracy, durability, and repeatability the automotive industry depends on every day.

4:55 p.m. Concluding Remarks

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Material | Functional | Production-Proven

October 8, 2026

Register to Attend

MSU Management Education Center
811 W Square Lake Rd. Troy, Michigan, USA

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- Compliance impact

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- Sustainability