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BEST PRACTICES FOR INDUSTRY LEADERS

TODAY

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FULL SPECTRUM

Automate sets up shop in Chicago in March. PAGE 18

INNOVATION COUNTS

Ford takes a big risk with its all-aluminum 2015 F-150. PAGE 42

FUTURE TENSE

Acieta's robotic systems make facilities more efficient and successful. PAGE 20



www.taper.com / Headquarters: Lexington, Ky. / Employees: 27 / Specialty: Taper roller bearings and spacer assemblies / Tom Jones: "We can produce extremely high quantities in a short time."

SOUTH



TAPER ROLLER BEARINGS
BUILDS ASSEMBLIES FOR FOUR
OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST
BEARING MANUFACTURERS.

SAME DAY SERVICE

TAPER ROLLER BEARINGS MAINTAINS ENOUGH INVENTORY TO MEET THE JIT NEEDS OF ITS CUSTOMERS. **BY RUSS GAGER**

Tapered roller bearings are used in a wide variety of equipment, including automobiles, printing presses, military vehicles, food pumps, and even in equipment to hydraulically fracture oil and natural gas wells.

The ability to ship bearings same-day, at least 80 percent of the time, is the specialty of Taper Roller Bearings (TRB) Inc., of Lexington, Ky. The company remains dedicated to providing same-day response to distribution requirements by maintaining superior inventory levels for

assemblies as well as exemplary associate teamwork.

"It's about innovation," President and CEO Tom Jones proclaims. "We build assemblies for four of the five largest bearing manufacturers on the planet. We strive to exceed our customers' inventory requirements by being prepared for their maximum usage at any given time of the year. That enables our customers to rest assured they are insulated against any potential slowdown in the external inventory system, such as a dock strike that can wreak havoc

with delivery times. This eliminates any potential negative impacts to our customers and ensures a constant flow of product with just-in-time or same-day delivery."

BEARING MANUFACTURE

For many components used in advanced weapons systems and transport vehicles by the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) and the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), TRB manufactures those bearings in a dedicated manufacturing facility. "We purchase U.S.-made steel and machine, grind and process that raw material into component parts," Jones explains. "The steel goes to a heat-treating facility and then it is returned for continued, finished processing. Our associates are proud to serve all members of

the U.S. Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security.”

TRB also manufactures spacer assemblies. It offers made-to-order Class 3 precision bearings and has the experience and capacity to manufacture and assemble 30434 code-bearing assemblies. Additionally, the company finds, assembles and delivers bearings for gear boxes, printing presses, motion control devices, steel manufacturers, fracking and many other industries.

TRB uses proprietary manufacturing equipment it produces in-house. “We continuously upgrade our measurement and process equipment,” Jones stresses. “It’s proprietary because we’re under non-disclosure agreements with all our suppliers and with the individuals that service our equipment. Ultimately, by striving to always improve our production equipment and processes, we are able to provide superior products to our customers.”

SHIPPING PROWESS

Jones attributes much of the success to its associates, who try to surpass customer requests. “We strive to never say ‘no,’” Jones says. “It’s our corporate mindset, our culture, to always find ways to solve the problem for a customer. We source worldwide. All members of our sales team are logistics experts.

“Ultimately, it’s about reducing downtime for our customer. That means our associates have to be well-versed in how you ship 15 pounds of product from Shanghai to Chicago in 18 hours, a package from Germany that weighs 1,000 pounds to England in the most economical and efficient method, or assist an individual in Indiana have their plant



TRB CREDITS ITS WORKFORCE FOR HELPING TO CONTRIBUTE TO MORE THAN FOUR DECADES OF SUCCESS.



back online within three hours by efficiently and effectively producing the required assembly.”

Jones notes that “whether we are producing 800, 900, 1,000 or more assemblies per day, this type of performance requires a team effort from all departments. Each associate swings into action and re-allocates their production schedule. No job is too small or large. We can produce extremely high quantities

in a short time period. When we say just-in-time, the material has barely hit the dock when it is processed, turned into assemblies, 100 percent inspected for 100 percent quality, and then shipped back to the customer in literally a matter of days. We attribute our more than four decades of success to our founder’s vision, our entire team and their ability to exceed the demands and requirements of our customers.” **mt**