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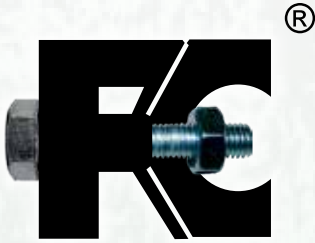


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WEATHERING THE STORM

The Indian Automotive Industry has hit the brakes hard as it is leading the torch of gloom in India. Everyday screaming headlines are making the morning coffee even more bitter: 'August 2019 records worst sales in 22 years', 'Auto sector over 350,000 jobs lost', 'Top vehicle manufacturers shutting factories temporarily', 'Deferment of capex investments', 'The worst is yet to come' and so on. This is attributed to several possible reasons. Most global automotive majors eyeing the Indian Markets have over installed capacities which are not yet in sync with the potential demand. Imposition of BS-VI norms with a blurred idea of transition to Electric Vehicles have, in effect, made consumers squat on their buying considerations. An indifferent budget and, subsequently, no action in reduction of GST by the government from 28 percent to 18 percent, which undoubtedly will cause a huge drop to ex-chequer revenues but may be another much-needed impetus to the Industry which is showing no signs of revival in the near future.

The overall GDP growth rate is arguably at 5 percent, the lowest in six years. Besides the automotive sector slowdown, an overall drop in the manufacturing output, the rising count of NPAs (non-performing assets) and a sluggish consumer demand partly attributed to the stock markets spiralling fall are affecting Industry segments across the board.

The Indian Fastener Industry has also been hit hard. Steel prices, after touching unprecedented highs early last year, have started dropping fast, causing unpredictability. Manufacturers heavily dependent on the Auto sector are hurting. Machinery and other capital expenditure investments are put on hold.

Phew! The social media forwards wear us off before our day even starts. Yes, we are facing tough times but is this barrage of negativity helping our cause? I recently got a rare positive whatsapp message which I endorse completely. The gist of it was how many of us could possibly not only survive the slowdown, but also benefit from it as a fitter organization.

The situation is very much like any economic cycle which will end at some point with a much-awaited revival. Positive and productive discussions and decisions will have a similar effect on your business and employees. Here we would have to bring in innovative cost controls and take advantage of developing new vendors. There would be financially weak companies that may sink in such slowdowns, creating avenues for acquisition of new customers. Effective training programs can also be conducted in times where production is down to single shifts. Work on reducing debt and increasing financial strength helps in portraying a good company image, thereby attracting the best vendors and prices. We are no economists to predict how the current situation will pan out over the next year but a positive attitude will help weathering the storm.



Source: FAI

ABHIJAT SANGHVI
President
Fasteners Association
of India (FAI)

Yes, we are facing tough times but is this barrage of negativity helping our cause? I recently got a rare positive whatsapp message which I endorse completely. The gist of it was how many of us could possibly not only survive the slowdown, but also benefit from it as a fitter organization.

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SURVIVING THE BUMPY RIDE AHEAD



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Businesses need to delve deep to identify the problem areas, pursue efficiencies for increasing profit margins, increase spending on R&D for growth and sustenance, explore export opportunities, and focus on revenue growth to increase the money flow.

The Automobile sector is dragging India's economy into an intense slowdown, ramping up pressure on various industries connected to it in one way or the other for their everyday business. The crisis brewing in the economy has gained the Government's acceptance with the Reserve Bank of India in its annual report stating that half-way through the financial year 2019-20, several uncertainties are looming large in the near-term.

The good news, however, is that not all sectors are bruised and battered. The spurt in the job losses seen in the Auto industry isn't being replicated in other industrial sectors. The Automotive sector hitherto had been the Fastener industry's main growth driver. With its slowdown, the time has come for think-tanks of the Fastener industry to look for the options that can stimulate the market demand. Infrastructure and Construction as well as Heavy engineering and Railways are segments that the Fastener industry should pursue aggressively.

Economic downturns are commonplace. They hit every business, sometimes for short durations and other times even for long. Recession brings challenges as well as opportunities. Businesses need to delve deep to identify the problem areas, pursue efficiencies for increasing profit margins, increase spending on R&D for growth and sustenance, explore export opportunities, and focus on revenue growth to increase the money flow. Weathering a weak economy is in our hands; it depends on the decisions that we make. Product innovations and formation of strategic alliances with application users will determine success. As the Fastener industry adopts innovative processing techniques, new opportunities will arise, enabling the industry to begin a new chapter.

Every cloud has a silver lining and a slowdown could be the best time to examine the grey areas, revamp production processes and close the gaps to emerge stronger.

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SUCCESS THROUGH FLEXIBILITY

Among the various strengths that have contributed to the massive success of Universal Precision Screws (UPS), its flexibility in production has helped the company cater to a wide variety of industrial segments and reach far and wide across the globe. Here's knowing its growth story...



Aerial view of the facility

Deemed as one of the best-quality and high-strength fastener manufacturers in India, Universal Precision Screws (UPS) started off its journey as a 100 percent export-oriented unit in 2006. Over time, the company built and expanded its customer base in the Indian market too, rising as a highly reputed fastener manufacturer of the country with a current employee strength of 630 and an export-to-domestic sales ratio of 74:26.

UPS' present turnover stands at an impressive \$30.5 million and the target for the next fiscal year is estimated at \$31.5 million. The vertical integrated manufacturing facility at Rohtak is spread across a sprawling area of 27,000 sq mt with a production capacity of 25,000 metric tonne per year.

Catering to myriad sectors

Speaking about the company's strengths, Rajesh Jain, Managing Director, UPS, states, "UPS' core expertise lies in producing safety critical fasteners for segments such as Aviation, Automotive, Defence, Renewable Energy, Locomotive, Power Transmission & Distribution, Medical, Oil & Gas, Tool & Die, etc."

"On the standard side, we manufacture as per DIN, ISO, ANSI, ASTM, JIS, and from these standards our majority of the standard business belongs to ANSI B18.8.1, ISO 7379, DIN 7979D, DIN 6325," he adds.

With a standard to customized product ratio a commendable 55:45, UPS exports to North America; countries such as Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Romania, Nether-

lands, France, Belgium, Czech Republic, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Denmark, Finland, Poland, Slovenia, the UK in Europe; and Taiwan, China, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia in South East Asia.

With its reach far and wide, it is hence quite obvious that the company was conferred with the Export Excellence Award in 2016-17 by Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC) of India.

UPS' Indian customers include Shriram Pistons & Rings Ltd, Federal-Mogul India, Continental Automotive,



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Ashimori India Pvt Ltd, GE, Honeywell, Mando Automotive India, Siemens, Gamesa etc. Whereas the international clients include Brighton-Best International, Wurth, Albert Pasvahl, Fastenal, Fabory, Star Stainless, F. Reyher, Brose, and GE.

Flexibility is the key

On the state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities UPS has, Jain shares, "We have all manufacturing and testing facilities in-house for manufacturing fasteners and machining components."

The company's lab is ISO17025-approved. Its production process starts from wire drawing followed by Cold Forging/Hot Forging/Warm Forging, Machining, Thread Rolling, Heat Treatment, Plating and Final inspection.

"Our Heat treatment facility and Non-Destructive Testing (NDT) are NADCAP approved. Our Warm Forming machine is capable of making fasteners from special grade steels like A286, Nimonic 80A, 15-PH, 17-4PH, Inconel, Titanium," he adds.

All the surface finish like Zinc plating with all kind of Passivation (white, blue, yellow, green, black), Hot Dip Galvanizing, Zinc Phosphating, Manganese Phosphating, Zinc Flake Coating, Cadmium Plating all are done in house. For each of the manufacturing operations, UPS possesses the latest technology and equipment. "Our production is flexible. We can produce a small

number to a million pieces of parts as per customer requirements," says Jain.

Diversification is crucial

Sharing the company's strategy to cope with the volatile market's ever-changing demands, Jain says, "Market demands vary from segment to segment. If one segment does not perform well at a given time, another one does very well. Hence, we are not completely dependent on one particular segment. We are able to retain our business in this volatile market only because of our diversification in different segments."

The company's R&D team has been continuously working on the development of new ideas and process optimization to focus on new segments. "Since the beginning of 2019, we have actively started supplying to the Aviation Industry," he adds.

Quality matters

Owing its keen focus on quality and innovation, UPS has received an impressive list of accolades and approvals from industry leaders such as Honda Cars and Maruti Suzuki. "UPS has the highest number of quality certifications like ISO 9001, ISO 14001, IATF 16949, OHSAS 18001, AS 9100D, ISO 17025, NADCAP and NABL certified quality lab and Quality Management systems in place. Our manufacturing aligns with Industry 4.0 with SAP HANA (ERP). Our R&D center helps our custom-



Source: Universal Precision Screws

Starting from 2006 till 2019, we have increased our production capacity by 200 percent. Every year, we install new equipment/machinery to increase our market share in the Indian as well as in the overseas markets."

Rajesh Jain
Managing Director
Universal Precision Screws

ers from the design stage and efforts are being gathered to build online and digital solutions to integrate the entire supply chain in the leanest way," informs Jain.

Gearing up for the future

With the rise in industrialization due to the impetus by the initiatives of the Indian Government such as SEZs and industrial clusters, the fastener industry is poised to grow. Jain tells us how UPS is preparing for it. "Starting from 2006 till 2019, we have increased our production capacity by 200 percent. We are participating in most of the international and domestic exhibitions related to the fastener industry. We are also in line with the 'Make in India' movement and are providing our assembly technology solutions to Railways, Renewable Energy segments and Smart Cities projects," he reveals summing up.



Source: Universal Precision Screws



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FORGING A STRONG BOND

After having weathered the quintessential storms that stir up in the making of a winner, Metaforge Engineering is now making its mark with an unmatched reputation in the Fastener industry as a manufacturer of cold forged parts.



CAPTION:

Source: Metaforge Engineering (I) Pvt Ltd



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Founded in 1970 by Amod Mehta, Mehta Coldforge would supply components to the Auto industries. A certain turn of events led to the company metamorphosing into Metaforge Engineering (I) Pvt Ltd in 1996, and later in 2005 began the process of

upgrading its facility to global standards for cold forging, heat treatment and electroplating. At present, operating out of a 50,000 sq ft facility, the company manufactures over 1,000 types of components. Its product range includes plain and step rivets, both ended

studs and threaded rods, special bolts, screws and inserts, clevis pins, ball pins, knurled pins, wire parts, CNC machined parts, parts for construction and electrical industries, special fasteners, etc., which it exports to countries including Germany, France, Egypt,

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Source: Metaforge Engineering (P) Pvt Ltd

The International market is huge and we are participating in various international exhibitions. If we maintain price and quality, we are sure to rope in more customers."

L-R: Prajakt Mehta, CEO & Technical Director and Kaustubh Mehta, Director, Metaforge Engineering

Kuwait, the USA and Canada. The family-owned company, with Directors Prajakt Mehta, Kaustubh Mehta and Siddhant Mehta, had an impressive turnover of ₹102 crore for 2018-19, and has major Indian and international customers including Bajaj Auto, Kawasaki, Endurance, Varroc, Rane NSK, KM Seat, Neel Auto, Autoline.

High standards of quality
An IATF and ISO 14001 / 18001 certified company, Metaforge has been acknowledged with

'Excellence in Technology' award by Automotive Component Manufacturers Association (ACMA), and has also hit many landmarks in various fields including Quality, Kaizen and TPM.

Throwing light on the company's achievements in cold forging, Prajakt Mehta, CEO & Technical Director, Metaforge Engineering, notes, "Our customers earlier would manufacture parts through machining. We converted over 65 items through cold forging, and considering the yearly volume, we could save almost 225 MT of materials in one year. ACMA awarded us for the achievement. The main advantage of cold forging, which our experience of almost 50 years has showed us, is that it gives the best possible solution to the customer through reduction in the input weight."

Pursuing ambitious goals
Metaforge aims to achieve a sales turnover of ₹2020 million by the year 2020. Talking of the plans underway to attain the goal, Mehta states, "We have achieved the growth of almost 55 percent last year. The target of ₹2020 million is really challenging in the present scenario. We have already added a few machines in the existing plant and are also to add one more plant with a world-class cold forging and inspection facility for manufacturing special fasteners including nuts. With this expansion, we should be in a position to achieve the target."


Pushing boundaries

Metaforge has 20 cold heading machines including single die to 5 die machines. It has a facility for thread

rolling, centreless grinding, CNC machining, drilling, tapping, machining, and so on. The company also uses hardening and tempering furnace, annealing furnace and induction hardening facility, and is also equipped with optical sorting machines, eddy current testing machines, hardness testers, etc. with plans underway to add a few more this year. A world-class electroplating plant is also under installation. At present, a team of 200 experienced people is working with Metaforge at its Nashik facility. Mehta informs that the technology has been procured from Taiwan and Metaforge is exploring possibilities of tie-ups with foreign companies for manufacturing critical parts. This, he believes, will enable the company to expand rapidly.

Towards the society

Highlighting his company's CSR (corporate social responsibilities), Mehta adds, "We have JCI Metaforge which is the only company in India having Jaycees at the company level. JCI Metaforge strives to motivate, educate and train people of the Metaforge family and enhance their leadership qualities." He further shares, "Meta Sports Group of Metaforge sponsors Republic Day and Independence Day programmes besides organizing a sports week in December every year and takes active participation in plantation inside and outside its premises."

The Metaforge team also visited the flooded area in Sangli and distributed essential items such as blankets, food, cleaning material, water bottles, etc. Further from every sale of ₹1 crore, Metaforge plans to sponsor one student's school fees from rural Maharashtra. 

Source: Metaforge Engineering (P) Pvt Ltd



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REDUCING TIME TO DESIGN

In today's competitive market, a company not only needs to have the expertise to manufacture a formed part at the lowest cost, but also the ability to manufacture it in the shortest possible time. A deliberation on an approach of automating the tasks that can reduce this time considerably...



Source: Magic Wand Media

The total time to manufacture a cold-formed part consists of the time taken for many different tasks including entering the order in part management system, creating forming sequence design, designing tooling, manufacturing tooling, producing sample parts for approval, inspecting and final debugging of the manufacturing process to start producing the parts. Any nonconformity to part specifications can add further time to resolve the issues.

This article discusses some of these tasks including forming sequence design, designing of tooling and

debugging the process and tooling design. The total time varies depending upon the product but as an example, if it takes 12 weeks to produce a cold-formed part, the tasks of sequence design, tooling design and debug may take one week. However, automating these tasks that can reduce this portion of the time from one week to one day.

Take a hypothetical scenario where the designer can work with the speed of a computer with parallel processing capabilities. Then they may take only 2-3 hours to create the sequence design, design the tooling, prepare the

drawings, perform simulation and make changes as needed. It is an unlikely scenario but what is possible is that in future we have a computer software program that is taught to perform a designer's tasks at an electronic speed. Our company, Metal Forming Systems, Inc. (MFSI) continues to extend its design and simulation software programs towards the goal of reducing the time from one week to 2-3 hours. Let us look at the individual tasks and see how the time taken can be shortened using the software tools MFSI provides to its customers for process design and simulation.



Fig. 1: Sequence Design Using 'Design by Command'

Standardizing and automating sequence design using NAGFORM

NAGFORM is a unique program for determining forming sequence for cold, warm or hot forged parts. Like a designer, it utilizes the forming rules and design logic to create alternative ways of forming a part. NAGFORM has a design procedure called Design by Command (DCM) that allows the designers to create their own forging sequence design through an interactive question and answer session. In a way, the designer is telling the program how to design a part. Once the session is recorded in a file, forming sequence design for any similar part with different dimensions can be automatically calculated by NAGFORM program. The program checks that the sequence design is within the forming rules. If the design is

not within rules, it informs of the deviation. The drawings can be automatically created in AutoCAD DXF format and SolidWorks 3D models.

The time to create a sequence design using DCM is less than 1/10 of that taken to create the design manually. For a Spark Plug, if it took 4 hours to create a sequence design manually, with DCM procedure in NAGFORM it would take less than 15 minutes. The added advantage is that DCM reduces the level of design expertise required of the user. By following the same rules, it always gives the same design irrespective of who is designing and there is no human error in calculations.

DCM is ideal for automating and standardizing forging sequences of product lines such as Fasteners (Standard and Specials) such as hex bolts and rivets as well as cold formed parts such

as spark plugs. The procedure to standardize and automate the sequence design with DCM is quite simple. Divide the parts into groups or families of the same shape. If the same part family is manufactured using different forging sequences, further divide into subgroups so there is only one sequence design for a group/subgroup. Using DCM, create a template session file for each forging sequence. To create sequence design for any part with different dimensions, use the template session file of the group to which this part belongs.

There is some effort to divide the parts in 'Groups' and create DCM templates. However, the advantages of automating sequence design in terms of saving of time and effort far exceed the time spend to develop. Fig. 1 shows examples of DCM procedure to create sequence designs.

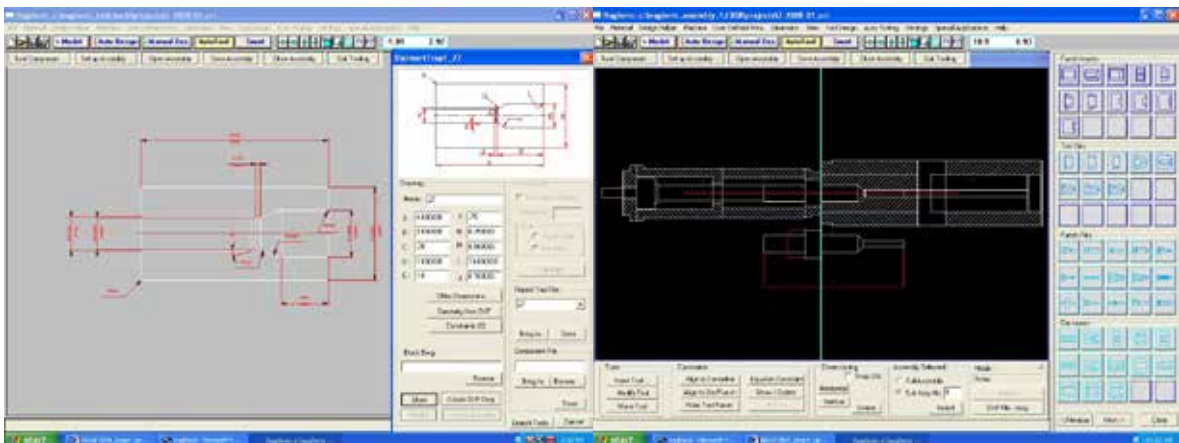


Fig. 2: Tooling and Assembly Design

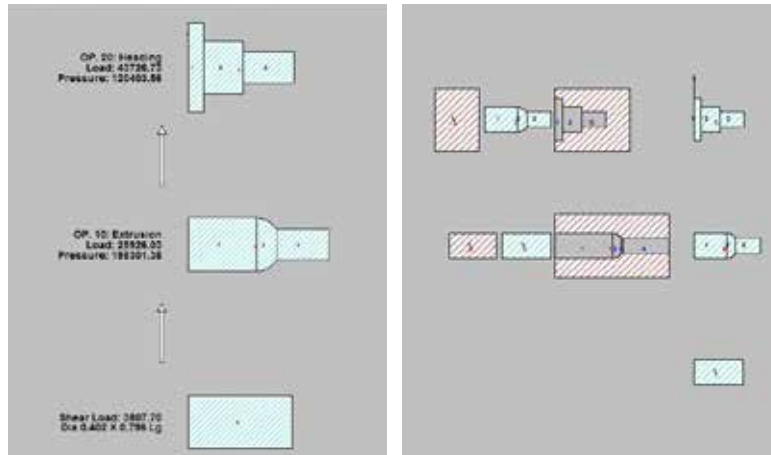


Fig. 3: Sequence Design & Default Tooling

Automating tooling design linked to progression design

Once the forging sequence design is automated, it is possible to automate the tooling design based on the sequence design. Because the tooling design requires drafting, plotting and other capabilities that are already available in most 3D CAD system such as SolidWorks, MFSI is developing an automated tooling design in partnership with a 3D CAD system. The automatic tooling design will be linked to the progression design of NAGFORM program so that as the part dimension changes, the design of the tooling components will automatically change based on certain rules/constrained set-up by the designer.

In the absence of a fully automated tooling design system, there are other ways to reduce

the time taken for tooling design. In NAGFORM program, templates of some of the standard tooling components are available. The user has to put in only a few dimensions and the program creates dimensioned drawings of the tool within seconds. So, the time taken for creating individual dimensioned drawings of the tooling components can be reduced from say ten minutes to one minute.

Simulation software linked to progression design software

Though it is not essential to perform FEA simulation each time a new progression/tooling design is created, users who are proficient in simulation software would normally perform simulation of the forging sequence. Especially for new parts, simulation of the forging

sequence operations before building the tooling can cut the part development time to half or less. In some cases, where the progression design had basic flaws, forging simulation can be the saver. Even for standard part, simulation can point out mistakes made in progression design or in dimensions of the tooling components.

Simulation of two-dimensional forging processes (round or long parts) is very simple. The set-up time for creating an analysis file is very small as templates of multi-station operations are used. The run time to perform a 2D simulation of multi-station operations is small and it is getting shorter due to the increasing computing power of new multi-core PCs. Most of the designer's time taken to perform a 2D simulation is in preparing the DXF drawing of the multi-station tooling. Another hindrance to performing a forging simulation is that, sometimes, the person who wants to perform simulation is not proficient in making tooling drawings.

To reduce the time and effort required to perform a 2D simulation using NAGSIM.2D simulation software, MFSI has developed a direct link between its Progression Design Software (NAGFORM) and its simulation software NAGSIM.2D. The current version of NAGFORM program automatically creates analysis file for NAGSIM.2D for 2-3 operations. Next version of

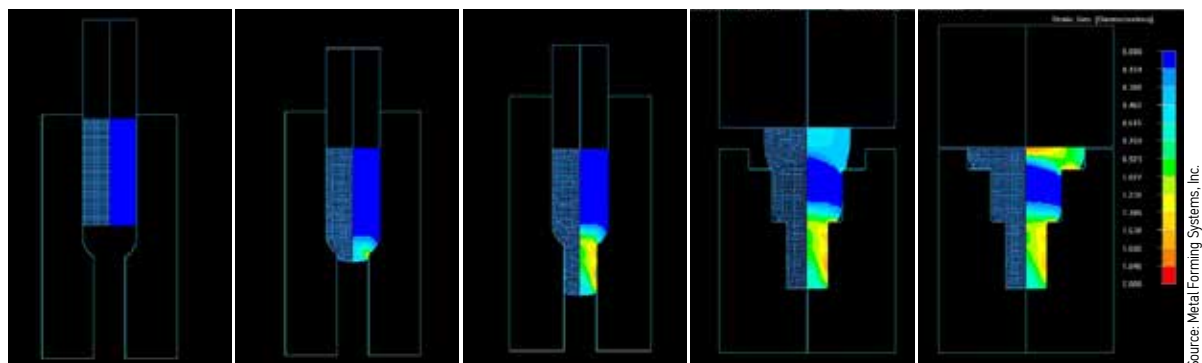


Fig. 4: Simulation Using NAGSIM.2D



Fig. 5: Hex Progression & Tooling Using NAGFORM

NAGFORM program would automatically create a DXF drawing of default tooling from the progression design and also create the analysis file for NAGSIM.2D simulation software for up to five operations.

The example in Figure 3 shows a simple part and its progression design created in NAGFORM program. The analysis file for NAGSIM.2D simulation was automatically created in NAGFORM in less than a minute. The results of the NAGSIM.2D simulation are shown in the Fig. 4.

Regarding simulation of the sequence design involving three-dimensional forging processes, the NAGFORM program can create the default tooling drawing, as shown in Fig 5, for the part shapes cre-

ated in the program using its primitives.

However, this 2D drawing cannot be used for 3D simulation in NAGSIM.3D for which 3D CAD models of the part and tools are required. There is considerable time and effort required for creating 3D CAD models of the tooling. In addition, there is a long run time for a 3D simulation.

To reduce the time to prepare 3D CAD models of the default tooling, MFSI plans to create an interface program between NAGFORM and SolidWorks so default tooling is created automatically in SolidWorks (Fig.6). This would be similar to what has been done to automatically create the 3D CAD models of sequence design of NAGFORM in SolidWorks.

Simulating to reduce time to manufacture defect-free part

There are many benefits of performing FEA simulation of cold forging processes including prediction of forging defects such as laps, under-fill, internal and surface cracking and resolving tool life issues. The best use of simulation software is when it is performed up front before building the hard tooling. Simulation not only saves cost and resources, but also the time to manufacture a defect-free part. There are many examples of organizations using FEA simulation to reduce cost and time. One example reported by FASTCO Industries is especially interesting as it demonstrates how sev-

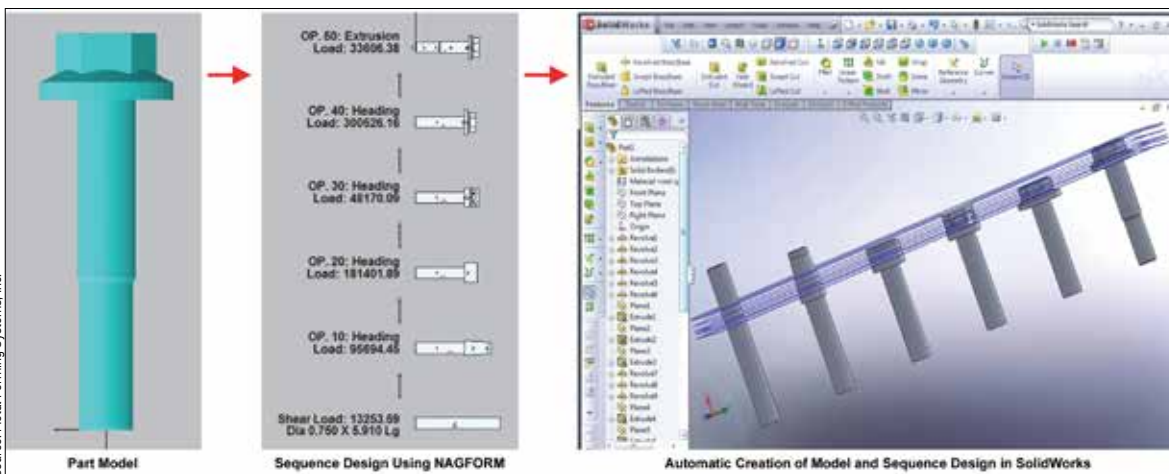


Fig. 6

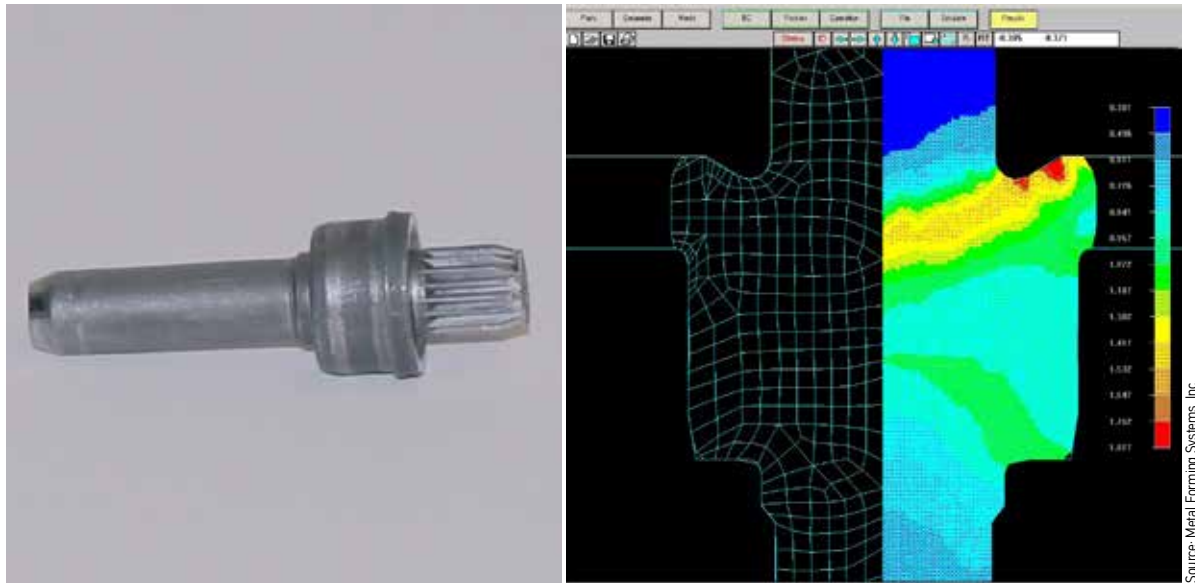


Fig. 7: Problem Solving Using NAGSIM.2D (FASTCO)

eral hours of time were saved up front by simulation. The under-fill was predicted by simulation and this concern was resolved with the customer before building the tooling (Fig. 7).

The benefits of FEA simulation of metal forming processes are not limited to just cold forging. Processes such as warm and hot forging, sheet metal forming, thread rolling and ring rolling are simulated to optimize the manufacturing process and tooling designs. In sheet metal forming, FEA simulation along with Forming Limit Diagrams (FLDs) is used to predict localized necking of the sheet during stretching. In hot forging, FEA simulations are performed to determine the starting blank shape and preforming operations to forge a defect-free part with minimum flash (Fig. 8).

Reduction of run time to perform 3D simulations so these can help up front in the manufacturing cycle remains a priority for MFSI. As computing power with parallel processing increases and software tools to harness that power become available, the simulation time will decrease in years to come.

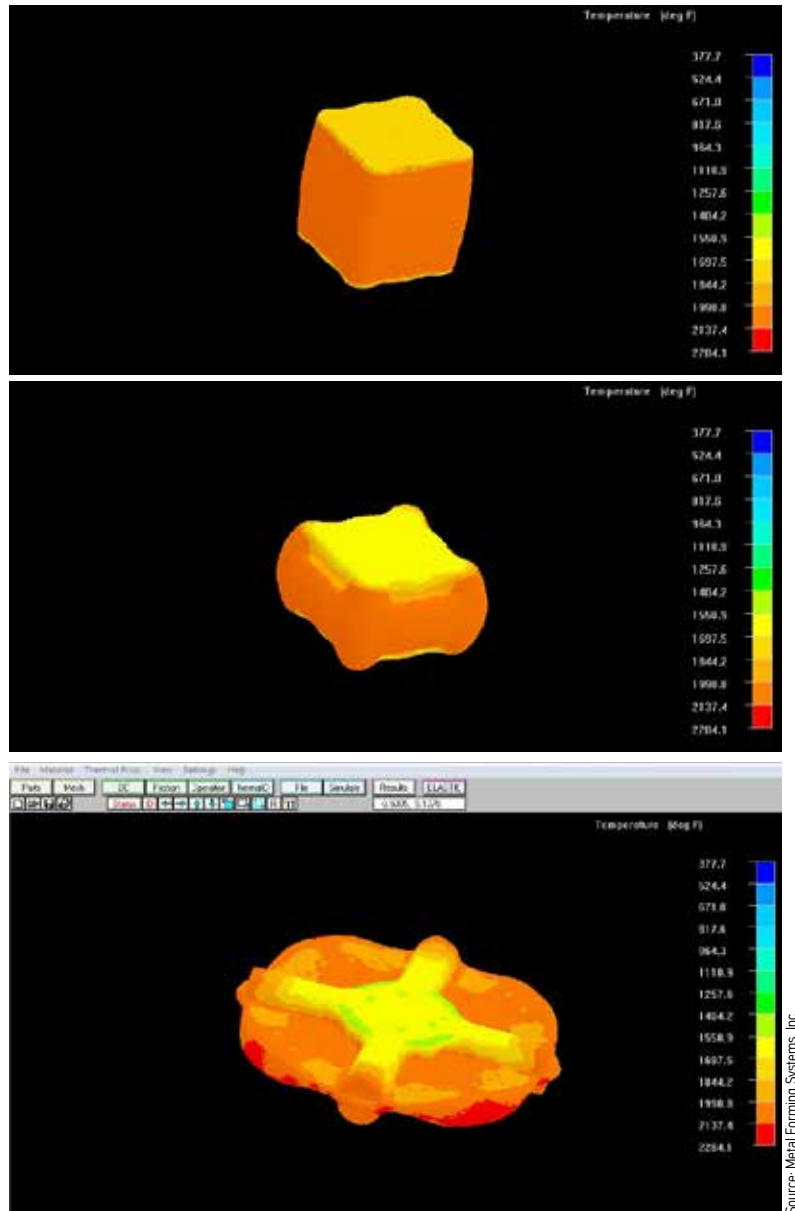


Fig. 8: Temperature Analysis (Hot Forging) Using NAGSIM.3D



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Sundram Fasteners to Step Up Investments

Suresh Krishna, Chairman, Sundram Fasteners Ltd (SFL), has revealed that the company will move ahead with fresh investments despite the current economic downturn that the automotive sector is going through. Recently while addressing the company's shareholders in Chennai, Krishna said that auto industry is cyclical in nature. Downturn was bound to happen at some point of time and businesses should be able to manage both good and bad returns.

He elaborated that Sundram Fasteners wouldn't shy away from investments. The company invested ₹440 crore in 2018-19 and plans to invest ₹350 crore in 2019-20. The investments will pay rich dividends when the economy and the auto sector get back on track, he added.

Arathi Krishna, Managing Director, Sundram Fasteners, said that her company was able to tide over such situations as it has diversified its business ventures through retail and exports which together account for around 45 percent of the company's sales.

Domestic sales fell to ₹557.22 crore in the first quarter ending 30 June (Q1) from ₹614.29 crore in the corresponding period a year ago. Interestingly, exports in the first quarter this year grew to ₹348.28 crore from ₹321.71 crore in 2018. SFL has also floated a subsidiary named Sunfast TVS to tap opportunities in defence and aerospace sectors. Arathi was confident that the new company would clock ₹100 crore within the next two years.

Sundram Fasteners is not just a fastener company any more, but a broad-based engineering company capable of undertaking manufacturing of various components and assembly systems for automotive and other engineering applications in India and abroad, she added. Today, of its around ₹4,002 crore revenue, only 30-35 percent comes from fasteners.

Businessmen Protest Delay in GST Refunds

Ludhiana businessmen are unhappy with the delay in getting GST refunds and have blamed state and central GST departments. With inordinate delay in getting refunds affecting their working capital, they are desperately seeking a solution.

Raj Kumar Singla, President, Fasteners' Suppliers' Association, said that whether it is state GST (SGST) or central GST (CGST) department, refunds are not happening on time. He further added that years old VAT refunds were still pending with the tax department even after VAT was scrapped. In addition, GST refunds worth crores of rupees have been piled up.

Pointing out that GST refunds served no benefits when situation of refunds were same as earlier, Singla said that his association has decided to approach Punjab finance minister Manpreet Badal to apprise him of the problem and seek a solution.

Harish Kairpal, Finance Secretary, Knitwear Club, said that if the trend continues then industry wouldn't be able to survive for long. Munish Sachdeva, a fastener manufacturer said, "We are conforming to all the rules and regulations of the GST law, but still are unable to get refunds on time. The biggest problem is that it is part of our working capital and any kind of delay means that amount is blocked with the government. As a result, we face fund shortage and our businesses suffer."

Auto Sector Waits to Gather Steam

Automotive sector has been witnessing headwinds with the sale of passenger vehicles plummeting by over 30 percent. Automobile and auto component sectors see the road to recovery getting difficult by the day.

Lumax Industries, a market leader in automobile lighting solutions has recently laid off around 500 contractual workers in its manufacturing units in Haryana citing poor demand from automakers. With a 20 percent drop in its revenue, Lumax has joined the growing list of component manufacturers that have downsized workforce and trimmed production.

Makers of springs used in vehicle suspensions, Jamna Auto Industries, revealed that it may close down its plants due to stagnating demand. Bosch Ltd has decided to restructure its business with the slowdown decelerating production. Vineet Sahni, CEO and Senior Executive Director, Lumax, said that the slowdown was significantly high and the drop in the revenue is forcing companies to shut their plants.

Small businesses are highly impacted by the sales slowdown. The share of SMEs in auto components is around 30 percent of the turnover and many of them are in fastener production business. Expansion and modernization have been kept on hold. As per Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), almost 15,000 workers have lost their jobs in automobile manufacturing companies.

The slowdown in the auto sector has had a cascading effect on the economy, causing hardships to small businesses which are in the business of providing logistics and raw materials to the manufacturing sector. Truck business has been hit with many not getting orders for ferrying raw materials.

SFL Not Just an Auto Parts Firm

Speaking at the 56th annual general meeting of the company, Suresh Krishna, Chairman, Sundram Fasteners Ltd (SFL), said that the company is no longer a manufacturer of auto parts alone. It has diversified its business to become a full-scale engineering company making fasteners and other hi-tech parts.

He added that the company has fared better despite the auto sector facing a downturn. Sundram Fasteners has metamorphosed into a large-scale engineering company that manufactures various components and assembly systems for automotive and other engineering applications in India and overseas. Throwing light on the expansion plans, Krishna shared the company's plans to invest ₹800 crore in the next two years. It spent ₹450 crore during the last fiscal and plans to spend ₹350 crore this year. The company is setting up a new unit at Sri City to manufacture high-precision engineering components. He further added that Sunfast TVS was supplying parts to defence sector and ISRO. Chandrayaan 2 spacecraft uses fasteners made by Sundram Fasteners.

Vedanta Eyes Top Slot

Vedanta Ltd., a subsidiary of Vedanta Resources Ltd., after having forayed into the steel business, now aims to be among the top four steel makers in India. The company is planning to expand its steel capacity to 10 MTPA from the present 1.5 MTPA in the next five to six years.

In June 2018, Vedanta acquired Electrosteel Steels Ltd (ESL), a primary producer of steel and downstream value-added products for ₹5,320 crore. ESL has a greenfield steel plant with a capacity of 1.5 MTPA near Bokaro in Jharkhand state.

Soon after ESL acquisition, Vedanta, with an investment of \$3-4 billion, announced capacity expansion of the Bokaro plant in phases. However, ESL wanted a turnaround before any capacity expansion, which was achieved through operational and commercial initiatives and rebranding of products. At the end of the last fiscal, the company posted an Ebitda of \$130-140 per tonne, as against \$65 per tonne at the time of the acquisition. Production stood at around 1.2 MT at the end of FY2018-19, posting 17 percent year-on-year growth. Aiming for a profitable portfolio, the steel maker has now launched a rebranded steel product mix comprising TMT bars, wire rods, ductile iron pipes, billets and pig irons.

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MacLean-Fogg and RIBE® Join Hands

Duncan MacLean, President and CEO of MacLean-Fogg has announced the joint venture formation of Aluform USA LLC between Richard Bergner Verbindungstechnik GmbH & Co. KG (RIBE®) of Schwabach, Germany, and MacLean-Fogg Component Solutions (MFCS) of Mundelein, IL USA.

The RIBE-Aluform® product is the market leader in the automotive industry for high-strength aluminum bolt, screw and stud fasteners for lightweight, corrosion-sensitive automotive applications. Aluform USA combines RIBE and MFCS strengths to bring Aluform products to the North American market, with application engineering, customer support and USA manufacturing.

MacLean said, "Vehicle lightweighting will continue to be a major industry trend as OEMs work to improve fuel economy and battery range. We're excited to further help our North American customers in their lightweight efforts by including Aluform high-strength aluminum bolts in our range of leading fastener solutions."

Frank Bergner, Managing Partner, RIBE, said, "MacLean-Fogg's excellent manufacturing capabilities, application engineering and customer service makes it an ideal partner to support and grow Aluform in North America." Aluform USA LLC will be headquartered in the existing MacLean Maynard division of MFCS in Chesterfield, MI.



USDOC Investigates on Imported Steel Staples

The US Department of Commerce (USDOC) has announced the initiation of new antidumping duty and countervailing duty investigations to determine whether certain collated steel staples from China, Korea and Taiwan are being dumped in the US and to determine if producers in China are receiving unfair subsidies. The investigations are based on petitions filed by Kyocera Senco Industrial Tools, Inc., Cincinnati, OH.



The alleged dumping margins are China at 119.37 to 122.55 percent, Korea at 10.23 to 14.25 percent, and Taiwan at 47.60 percent. There are 27 subsidy programs alleged for China – five preferential loan/interest rate programs, two export credit programs, five income tax and other direct subsidy programs, four indirect tax programs, six grant programs and five less than adequate remuneration programs. If USDOC makes affirmative findings, and if the US International Trade Commission finds that dumped and/or unfairly subsidized US imports of collated staples from China, Korea and Taiwan are causing injury to the US industry, then USDOC will impose duties on those imports.

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Mike McNulty
VP & Editor
Fastener Technology International

Fastenal Celebrates 1,000th Onsite Milestone

In early June, Fastenal, Winona, MN, announced that it reached a vending machine milestone of 100,000 active units, and in July, it reached another milestone of 1,000 active onsite locations, each providing a customized local supply chain within (or very near) to customer's facility. The 1,000th onsite was set up within Rocanville, Saskatchewan facility of Nutrien, a Canadian fertilizer company with operations in 14 countries. This Fastenal onsite location was Nutrien's third dedicated service location. Fastenal's onsite concept came in response to a specific customer need in 1992 when a large manufacturing plant required more product inventory than the local Fastenal branch could fit on its shelves. The firm also wanted Fastenal to be in its facility on a daily basis to assess its needs and replenish inventory. There are now over 1,000 onsites generating over 25 percent of Fastenal's total revenue.

Innovative Components adds Automated Assembly Machine

Schaumburg, IL - based supplier of plastic knobs, quick-release pins, wire rope lanyards and thread identifiers Innovative Components, Inc. has recently invested in a new automated assembly machine that drastically increases the company's capacity in assembling press-on thumb screws. The new machine will free up resources that can be utilized to fulfil the company's other manual light assembly work orders.



ParkOhio Chairman/CEO Becomes US Ambassador

ParkOhio, Cleveland, OH, a leading provider of supply chain management services and highly engineered manufactured products, has announced that after 26 years as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Park-Ohio Holdings Corp., Edward F. Crawford has resigned as an Officer and Board Member, effective June 17, 2019, to assume the responsibility as the US Ambassador to the Republic of Ireland. ParkOhio will continue to advance in numerous channels led by the current Chairman and CEO, Matthew V. Crawford. Edward F. Crawford stated, "I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the stakeholders for supporting a vision resulting in the evolution of a great company."

USDOC Determines Threaded Rod from China & India

The US Department of Commerce (USDOC) has announced the affirmative preliminary determinations in the countervailing duty investigations of imports of carbon and alloy steel threaded rods from China and India, finding that exporters received countervailable subsidies ranging from 23.41 to 24.89 percent and 6.07 to 155.03 percent, respectively. Based on these preliminary determinations, USDOC will instruct the US Customs and Border Protection to collect cash deposits from importers of carbon and alloy steel threaded rods from China and India based on the preliminary rates. In 2018, carbon and alloy steel threaded rods imported from China and India were valued at approximately US\$104.7 million and US\$35.8 million, respectively. Vulcan Threaded Products Inc., Pelham, AL was the petitioner.

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Böllhoff Logs Ninth Consecutive Sales Surge

Böllhoff Group reported consolidated sales of €651.6 million in 2018, a 5.15 percent increase against 2017, marking continued growth for nine consecutive years. The Group also reported record levels of investment, increasing more than 50 percent to €65.1 million. Recording its 142nd year in business, the Group comprises 45 companies, with 39 locations in 24 countries – including 13 production facilities. At the end of 2018, it employed 3,046 people, 254 more than at the end of 2017. Some 1,500 are employed in Germany.

Sales of €312.5 million, around 48 percent of the Group's total, were generated in Germany and €203.8 million (31 percent) came from the rest of Europe. The Group also did well in America with the sales of €75.5 million and Asia with the sales of €59.9 million.

Automotive sector was the largest buyer, amounting to 58.4 percent of sales, while aerospace sector accounted for 1.2 percent and 39.4 percent sales went to other industries. Noting the ninth successive sales growth, Böllhoff management said that they were seeing signs of consolidation phase and attributed this to influencing factors involving geopolitics and the European policy.

The Group's 2018 annual report highlights investments into the infrastructure, machinery and IT, totaling €65 million. These address bottlenecks throughout the Böllhoff value-added chain, the consequence of nine years of steady growth. Many of the projects are scheduled for completion in 2019 or 2020.

Optimistic as regards the years to come, Böllhoff management stated that the group was confident of being perfectly equipped to meet both the current and future demands of the market.

Hilti's Four-Month Sales Up 6.2%

Hilti Group has recorded a 6.2 percent sales increase in the first four months of 2019 to CHF1.931 billion registering a growth of 7.6 percent. Christoph Loos, CEO, Hilti, explained, "Overall, we had a positive start to 2019 in the first four months and sales are within our expectations. For the entire year, we continue to expect growth in the mid-to-high single digits, even though the dynamics in the construction industry have slowed somewhat in several regions."

In Europe and North America, the Hilti Group was able to maintain strong growth amid an ongoing positive market environment, growing sales in local currencies by 9.6 percent and 8.1 percent, respectively. Sales in Latin America grew 5.6 percent while the Asia/Pacific region saw a rise of 3.2 percent. The EMEA region grew 3 percent in the face of economic tensions in Russia, Turkey and the Gulf region.

Trifast Continues Its Growth Story

Trifast reported total Group revenue of GB£209.1 million (€233.7 million) for FY 2018-2019, a year-on-year increase of 5.8 percent. Its European operations had a strong year, with a growth of 5.8 percent, driven by double-digit revenue increase across six of eight entities including automotive, electronics, and general engineering sectors.

In Asia, with GB£58.7 million revenue, the company achieved a 2.6 percent year-on-year growth with increase in domestic appliances volumes from Singapore. Its UK business remained healthy with GB£79.1 million revenue and 8.4 percent growth arising from acquisition of Precision Technology Supplies (PTS).

Organic trading levels, however, reduced slightly (-1.4 percent) due to the downturn in the UK automotive manufacturing volumes. Outside of this, Trifast reported another solid year in its most mature market – mainly driven by high ongoing demand in both general industrial and distributor business.

In the US, Trifast, with GB£8.9 million, registered an exceptional revenue growth of 38.3 percent, reflecting gains in automotive and electronics sectors and utilization of Tier1 and OEM customer relationships.

Underlying profit before tax increased 5.9 percent (CER) to GB£23.6 million. Organic growth stood at 2 percent (AER), with PTS contributing a further 3.6 percent of growth to the topline.

Gross margins remained on target at 30 percent despite the impact of anticipated purchase price inflation in the UK and upfront costs of ongoing investments in European manufacturing capacity. Underlying operating margins increased to an historic high of 11.6 percent.

Mark Belton, CEO, Trifast and Claire Foster, CFO, Trifast, noted "Trifast has delivered a solid performance and the directors remain optimistic about the progress the business will make over the coming financial year. Despite the potential implications of BREXIT and the continuing trade tensions between the US and China, the board remains confident in its strategy, its people and the Group's flexibility to adapt to change."

Bulten Scores Gold for Sustainability

Bulten AB got gold-medal in EcoVadis business sustainability ranking and is rated in the top 1 percent of companies in its industry. EcoVadis is an independent international organisation that evaluates, scores, and ranks companies' integration of sustainability issues in their business activities. The assessment is based on 21 criteria in four areas: environment, fair working conditions, business ethics, and the supply chain. The method used is based on international Corporate Social Responsibility standards such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), the UN Global Compact, and ISO 26000. "Bulten's ambition and sustainability strategy is that the entire business should be permeated by a sustainability-oriented way of thinking. We are hugely proud of this recognition, which consolidates our position as one of the best in our industry when it comes to sustainability," said Marlene Dybeck, Senior Vice-President, HR and sustainability, Bulten.

Cooper & Turner to Join Beck

Andaray (Holdings) Ltd and its subsidiaries (Cooper & Turner) have entered into an agreement with Beck Industries (Beck) for potential combination of the two groups. The combined entity aims to be the first global manufacturer of safety critical fasteners supporting a wide range of industries including renewable energy, tunnelling, construction, rail, heavy equipment, downstream oil & gas, power and nuclear, among others. The family business has been successfully run by owners Petra and Jürgen Bergfelder for many years. On May 01, 2019, the management was expanded to include new managing directors, Gerda Söhngen and Christian Schmidt. Cooper & Turner serves a global customer base with manufacturing and distribution operations across the European Union, China and North America. Beck, a France-based manufacturer and distributor of fully certified, high-security bolting components, has built a global operation that complements and expands that of Cooper & Turner. The proposed combination of Cooper & Turner and Beck will broaden the geographic reach of both companies, enabling the supply of world-class products and services from 17 strategically positioned facilities throughout Europe, North America, Asia and North Africa.

"It's an exciting time at Beck. Business is strong, our order book is growing, and we have an opportunity with Cooper & Turner to potentially combine our complementary geographic footprint, technologies, and product portfolios to create an unequalled platform to serve our local and international clients," stated Hugues Charbonnier, President, Beck Industries.

"We are energised by the possibility of joining forces with the Beck team to create a new global leader in high quality, mission-critical fasteners," stated Tony Brown, Group CEO, Cooper & Turner. "Supported by our partners at the Watermill Group, which is a family-owned investment company, we see tremendous opportunity to further serve the energy market worldwide."

NORMA Q1 Sales Rise Moderately

NORMA Group recorded €275.6 million sales in Q1 of 2019, up 1.1 percent as against Q1 in 2018. While organic sales fell by 4.2 percent, acquisitions of Kimplas and Statek contributed 2.3 percent and €6.2 million, respectively. Currency effects contributed 3.1 percent to sales growth. Adjusted EBITA for the quarter fell 13.3 percent to €39.6 million (Q1 2018: €45.7 million). The adjusted EBITA margin was 14.4 percent (Q1 2018: 16.8%). Net operating cash flow increased by €13.5 million to -€0.3 million.

NORMA explained: "The business development in the first quarter of 2019 is mainly attributable to the lower production and sales figures in the automotive sector in all three regions. Above all, the EMEA and Asia-Pacific regions were characterised by a very volatile market environment: Lower production volumes in the European automobile industry due to the difficulties encountered in the summer of 2018 in implementing the standardised, stricter test procedure for emission values (WLTP) and a sharp decline in demand from the Chinese automotive industry." Sales in EMEA region fell 2.8 percent to €128.4 million against €132.2 million in Q1 of 2018 while it rose by 4 percent in America to €111.6 million against €107.3 million in Q1 of 2018. Commercial vehicles and agricultural machinery business grew rapidly while production in North American automotive sector fell. Asia-Pacific sales increased 7.5 percent to €35.6 million against €33.1 million in Q1. NORMA increased Asia-Pacific sales by 7.5 percent to €35.6 million (Q1 2018: €33.1 million). While the Chinese automotive sector experienced significant production declines, the acquisition of Kimplas in India contributed to additional sales revenues.

Bufab Acquires Nordic HT Bendix A/S

Bufab has acquired all outstanding shares in HT BENDIX A/S, with annual sales of approximately DKK 345 million (around €46.5 million) and an operating margin of approximately 10 percent. HT BENDIX A/S is a leading C-parts supply chain partner in the Nordics with a strong expertise in the furniture and fittings industries. The company has head office and operates in Herning, Jutland and Denmark, and generates sales throughout Scandinavia, Baltics, Germany, England, France and Poland. HT BENDIX A/S has about 80 employees and generates annual sales of approximately DKK 345 million with good profitability.

Announcing the acquisition, Jörgen Rosengren, President and CEO, Bufab, said that it was a significant add-on to existing businesses in the Nordics and the development presents attractive growth synergies for both companies. "HT BENDIX A/S is well known in the industry for its high-quality products and services, solution-oriented approach and skilled staff," he added.

"In the past years, Bufab has become known as a leader in the C-parts industry globally. We have looked for a global player with the strength to help us bring our company to a new level, as well as a mindset and culture that fits HT BENDIX A/S. We are convinced that Bufab is the ideal partner to continuous successful growth," said Kaj Østergaard, Managing Director, HT BENDIX A/S.

The acquisition is financed within Bufab's existing credit facilities. The purchase price, on an 'enterprise value' basis, amounts to approximately SEK 350 million (€33 million) upon closing of the transaction. An additional purchase price preliminarily estimated at SEK 70 million will be paid out in instalments in 2020 - 2022, conditional on stable and improving financial development. The acquisition will close and take effect immediately, but is conditional on the customary authority approvals, and will be reported within Bufab's segment Sweden. It is expected to contribute to Bufab's earnings per share starting from the third quarter of 2019.



Source: Fastener + Fixing Magazine



Will Lowry
Editor
Fastener + Fixing Magazine

ALCA Fasteners Admits Bribery

The United Kingdom's Serious Fraud Office (SFO) has disclosed that Carole Ann Hodson, former Managing Director and majority Owner, ALCA Fasteners pleaded guilty to bribery for securing GB£12 million worth of contracts for ALCA Fasteners.

Nearly GB£300,000 of bribes were paid between 2011 and 2016 to Terje Moe, a Purchasing Manager of the Würth Group, an ALCA customer. Moe would receive 2.5 percent commission on every order made by his company to ALCA Fasteners. Moe pleaded guilty to two charges relating to the receipt of bribes, contrary to the Norwegian Criminal Code.

Fake invoices were issued to justify the transfers, recorded in ALCA Fasteners' accounts as 'sales commission payments' and other payments not related to genuine transactions. Hodson later lied to her company's auditors to disguise the true nature of the payments. To maintain the value of her company prior to selling it in 2017, Hodson lied to purchasers by claiming that her company wasn't involved in any unlawful conduct.

Lisa Osofsky, Director, the Serious Fraud Office (SFO), said: "Ms Hodson has admitted her part in this crime and pleaded guilty to her misconduct. Bribery has no place in British business. This sort of corruption corrodes trust and distorts markets, making it impossible for companies to function and undermining the UK's reputation as a rule of law country and a safe place to do business."

British Steel Placed into Receivership

A UK court has appointed EY as official receiver for British Steel following its failure to secure emergency funds from the British Government. Sky News broke the story that British Steel had collapsed with its funder Greybull seeking additional funding from the government which had already lended it GB£120 million loan to cover environmental compliance costs. Greybull had initially sought GB£75 million but reduced it to GB£30 million. UK Business Secretary Greg Clark in a statement said that the government has worked tirelessly with British Steel, its owner Greybull Capital, and lenders to explore all potential options to secure a solution. He said it would be unlawful to provide guarantee or loan on the terms of any proposals that the company or any other party has made. He said that he will work with the official receiver and British Steel to tide over the situation.



Peugeot Begins Recall of Expert Versions

From the end May 2019, the unit of Peugeot in Brazil has begun a recall involving 1,078 units of the expert versions produced between 2017 and 2018 due to inadequate torque application in the fixing of the front triangle patella. Poorly fastened, there may be detachment of the knee cap and / or displacement of the wheels, causing the risk of loss of control of the vehicle. The maintenance involves inspection and reinforcement or replacement of the assembly, which can last for one hour.

Porsche Recalls Some Models

According to the news published on Garagem360.com.br, the models Porsche 718 Boxster, 718 Cayman and 911 have been recalled for maintenance due to issues involving rivets used in the trunk. There is a defect in the connection between longitudinal part and the crossbar of the luggage compartment, which in the event of a frontal collision can lead to failure of the fuel system besides causing leaks and leading to serious accidents. The recall involves models manufactured between February 2016 and 2019. The repair involves installing blind rivets, a service that takes about 15 minutes.

Source: Revista do Parafuso
(The Fastener Brazil Magazine)

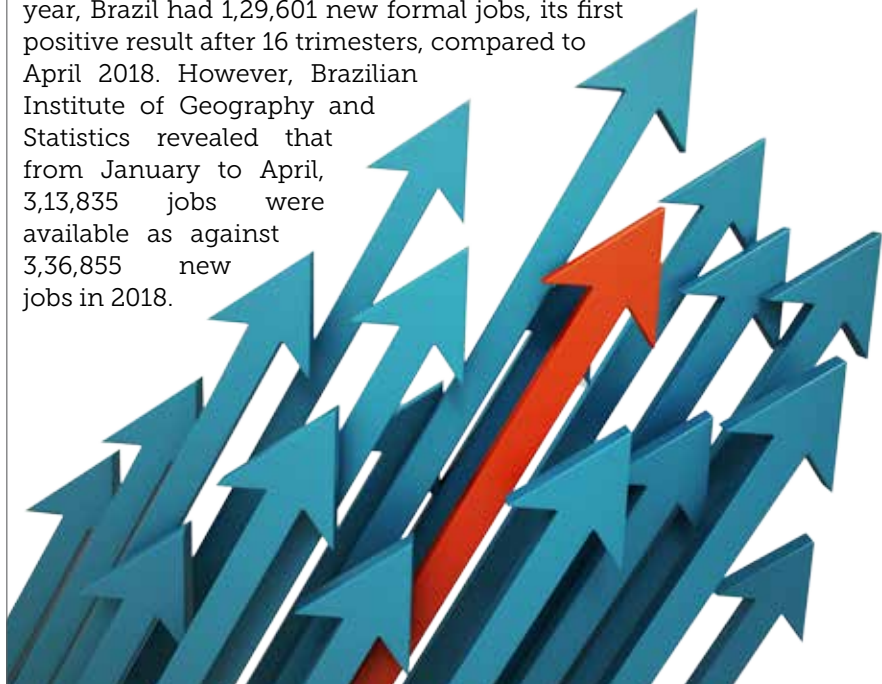
REVISTA DO PARAFUSO



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Brazilian GDP Plummetts, Automotive Sector Grows

Brazil's Q1 GDP in 2019 fell but domestic auto production rose 5.3 percent as against 2018. Analysts point to Vale S.A., the second-largest mining company in the world, as the main reason for a fall of 0.2 percent in GDP when compared to Q4 of 2018. However, when compared to Q1 of 2018, the result was positive with 0.5 percent increase and an overall 0.9 percent rise during the last 12 months. The scenario was positive for automotive sector which produced more than 1,241 million units between January and May 2019 as against 1,178 million for the same period in 2018, recording an increase of 5.3 percent. Agricultural and road machinery fell during the period while data about two wheelers between January and April showed marginal increase. Cement sales, one of the main inputs for construction market, recorded growth. As per National Union of the Cement Industry, 4.4 million tonne of products were sold in the country in April 2019, an increase of 0.2 percent as against the same quarter in 2018. In April this year, Brazil had 1,29,601 new formal jobs, its first positive result after 16 trimesters, compared to April 2018. However, Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics revealed that from January to April, 3,13,835 jobs were available as against 3,36,855 new jobs in 2018.





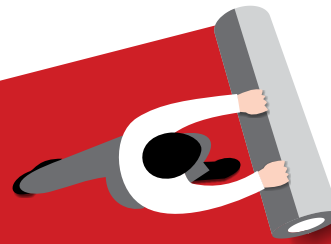
Jomarca Completes 50 Years

In 1969, when American astronaut Neil Armstrong walked on the moon for the first time, a young fastener sales agent João Marques Castelhana founded Jomarca Industrial de Parafusos. What began as a modest company producing few types of fasteners would over the years grow into one of the largest groups in Brazil producing more than 3.1 thousand tonne per month employing over 700 employees. João is assisted by his

son Ricardo Marques Castelhana, the Group's Vice President. The company has undergone modernization and greater expansion in the market. Located in São Paulo state close to South America's largest airport, Jomarca's plant is the main warehouse of wide line with bolts, screws, nuts, washers, pins, rivets, threaded bars and other fasteners. The company has another unit which produces hinges as well as Jomarca kits. The Group's subsidiaries are engaged in the supply of kits for furniture industry, extensive activity to various segments such as kits for TV stand installations throughout Brazil and in Mercosur.

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China's Foreign Trade 4.2% Up

China's foreign trade rose 4.2 percent year-on-year in the first seven months of this year to 17.41 trillion yuan (\$2.49 trillion), customs data revealed on August 08. According to the General Administration of Customs (GAC), exports increased 6.7 percent to 9.48 trillion yuan during the period, while imports grew 1.3 percent to 7.93 trillion yuan. China saw its trade surplus widen by 47.4 percent to 1.55 trillion yuan during the same period. The country's trade mix continued to optimize with general trade growing in volume and proportion in the January-July period. General trade grew 5.7 percent and accounted for 59.8 percent of the total trade, 0.8 percent higher than the same period last year. European Union remained China's largest trading partner with bilateral trade volume up 10.8 percent from one year earlier to 2.72 trillion yuan, followed by the ASEAN, up 11.3 percent to 2.35 trillion yuan, and the United States, down 8.1 percent to 2.1 trillion yuan. The country's trade with Belt and Road countries totaled 5.03 trillion yuan, up 10.2 percent, 6 percent higher than the overall pace, said GAC, adding that the amount accounted for 28.9 percent of China's total trade volume.

China's Industrial Output Up 4.8%

China's value-added industrial output, an important economic indicator, rose by 4.8 percent year-on-year in July, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said. The growth rate was 1.5 percent lower than that recorded in June. On a monthly basis, the industrial output edged up 0.19 percent from June.

In the first seven months, industrial output climbed 5.8 percent from a year earlier, with the pace of growth decelerating from 6 percent registered during the first half of the year, NBS data showed.

Industrial output, officially called 'industrial value added', is used to measure the activity of designated large enterprises with annual turnover of at least 20 million yuan (about \$2.8 million). A breakdown of the data showed the production and supply of electricity, thermal power, gas and water reported a year-on-year growth of 6.9 percent in July, the fastest among the three major sectors and accelerating 0.3 percent from June.

Manufacturing output rose by 4.5 percent year-on-year, down from 6.2 percent in June, and output growth of the mining sector eased to 6.6 percent from 7.3 percent in June. High-tech manufacturing maintained fast expansion, with its output increasing 6.6 percent last month.

Xinjiang's Fixed-Asset Investment Rises in H1

Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region's fixed-asset investment (FAI) rose by 7.3 percent in the first half (H1) of the year to 184.35 billion yuan (\$26.23 billion). The growth rate was 56.2 percent higher as against same period last year, which shows that the region's FAI rebounded rapidly.

According to an economic performance report of Xinjiang in H1 of 2019 issued by the regional government, the region has sped up the construction of a batch of key projects, including the operation of Urumqi Metro Line 1 and expansion of Urumqi Diwopu International Airport. From January to June, 87.74 billion yuan was invested in key projects in Xinjiang. Construction on 48 new projects started during the period with a total investment of nearly 8.96 billion yuan, said the report.

In H1, the region strengthened infrastructure construction in poverty-stricken areas in south Xinjiang. So far, construction on key projects, including a water conservancy project on the Yurungkax River in Hotan Prefecture and a power grid project, has started. In addition, a power network transmission and transformation project in the prefecture, which went into operation in late June, has efficiently improved the power supply shortage in the area. The region has also accelerated the construction of more railway and road projects, according to the report.

Machinery Sector Stable in H1

The machinery industry of China maintained steady growth in the first half (H1) of this year despite downward pressure, an industrial association said. The industry's revenue amounted to 10.53 trillion yuan (around \$1.5 trillion) in H1, up 1.29 percent year-on-year, while total profits came in at 619.5 billion yuan, down 8.58 percent from a year earlier, according to the China Machinery Industry Federation. The transition of growth drivers continued in the machinery industry as new energy vehicles registered fast growth in output and sales in H1, surging 48.5 percent and 49.6 percent year-on-year, respectively, the federation noted.



Fany Fan
English Editor

Source: ChinaFastener Magazine

ChinaFastener.com
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Resilient Foreign Trade Shows Potential

Foreign trade ports in China rarely have vehicles passing without full load. For example, Qingdao port in East China's Shandong province where trains bound for Europe have been increasing since last year. This reflects China's growing presence in foreign markets and exports. In the first half of 2019, the total value of traded goods gained 3.9 percent year-on-year, reaching 14.67 trillion yuan. Exports totaled 7.95 trillion yuan, up 6.1 percent. Trade surplus increased by 41.6 percent to 1.23 trillion yuan. Li Kuiwen, Spokesman, General Administration of Customs, said foreign trade in China is growing steadily. A recent report by WTO lowered expectations for global trade growth in 2019. Major economies like Germany, Japan and Korea saw a decrease in total value of imports and exports in the first season of this year. Growth rate of China's exports stayed ahead of world's major economies. Over the last



four years, China's total value of foreign trade in the first half has risen, from 11.13 trillion yuan in 2016 to 14.12 trillion yuan this year. According to customs statistics, in the first half of 2019, China's general trade import and export hit 8.78 trillion yuan, a year-on-year growth of 5.5 percent, accounting for 59.9 percent of China's total foreign trade value, 0.9 percent higher than in the same period in 2018.

EMO Hannover

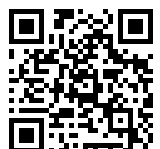
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ATS at Bolt Fastening Session 2019

Asia Technical Services (ATS), a well-known length and torque calibration laboratory in Taiwan as well as a sales agent of SCHATZ (KISTLER Remscheid)/microGLEIT/Dörken/SCHLAGER/n-gineric/IAC, collaborated with Fastener World Magazine, a globally known fasteners and hardware industry marketing and promotion platform to organize the recently held 2019 Bolt Fastening Session in Tainan and Taipei.

Christoph Otto, who has more than 30 years of experience in fastener engineering and who after retirement helped German leading car manufacturers train their bolt assembly technicians, was invited to lecture on MBN 10544 Testing of Torque/Clamp Force Behavior, Testing of Adhesive Coating DIN 267-27, and Troubles During and After Tightening. Nearly 200 attendees including representatives of local branches of German and Italian leading distributors or manufacturers attended the sessions.

Established in 1976, ATS is an independent third-party inspection company, providing inspection and calibration service and representing SCHATZ/microGLEIT/Dörken/SCHLAGER/n-gineric/IAC in Taiwan. Its length calibration laboratory and torque calibration laboratory were respectively approved by TAF (CNLA) in 1995 and 1999. These two laboratories were combined into a TAF 0123 certified laboratory in 2009. Its length calibration laboratory was the first certified laboratory in Taiwan for thread ring gauges. It also co-established with German SCHATZ, the torque calibration laboratory. German SCHATZ has been officially renamed KISTLER Remscheid. With the advantages of the Group's resources, ATS hopes to provide customers with more complete and full-range services.



Jet Fast to Show its Latest at International Fastener Expo

The PFA rubber nut-insert series developed by Jet Fast with an iron sleeve mounted on the top of the rubber nut-insert is likely to be center of attraction at the International Fastener Expo 2019. During fastening, the bottom of the sleeve presses against the internal nut, preventing over-tightening. The rubber nut-insert mounted with a sleeve can be driven with a screw for a riveting purpose, and there is no need to additionally mount a fastened plate or washer, making the installation an easy task. Rubber and nylon nut-insert can apply to soft boards such as those made of plastic, wood, fiber glass, and glass. The installation is free from the use of special tools and the nut-inserts are reusable, something that average metal rivet nuts cannot accomplish. The rubber nut-inserts are a one-piece construction formed with neoprene/EPDM rubber and special-purpose copper or stainless steel nuts. With good flexibility, the rubber nut-inserts can be used on thin plates or for deep-hole assembly, and can effectively block air or liquids from infiltrating into the seams of assembled parts, absorb impact and noise and reduce vibration, and even decrease the chance of loosening as a result of vibration. Moreover, they can insulate from currents and static electricity. Jet Fast has had indirect collaborations with European carmakers for many years. It is IATF16949 certified and has strict requirements on products. Its original



product, the rubber nut-inserts, are preferred by carmakers as they reduce vibration and decrease the chance of screw loosening.

Fu Hui Screw Caters to American Energy Industry

With IATF 16949 and ISO 9001 certifications, Fu Hui Screw has global-standard quality and over half a century experience in customizing fasteners. The company believes in quality and on-time delivery, and specializes in special automotive parts and fasteners for energy industry. It has developed various products favored by the American market. Many of its copper and aluminum fasteners are supplied to American energy plants. The copper fasteners have good electric conductivity and are coated with a layer of tin for corrosion prevention. The company also provides products in brass, silicon bronze, copper, etc. For the energy industry, Fu Hui Screw has developed an aluminum fastener called 'Double-Hexagon-Layer Safety Screw'. With this safety screw, torque value can be set in accordance with the clients' demand. Once the specified torque is reached, the first hexagon layer would automatically break to stop the operator's installation when the optimal performance of the fastener is reached, without worrying about over-tightening and rupture. The company with 53 years of experience has spent NTD 3 million to adopt a GOM ATOS Core 3D scanning machine to handle requests from the European carmakers.



TFTA Assembles Directors and Supervisors

Taiwan Fastener Trading Association (TFTA) recently held a directors' and supervisors' assembly. The assembly was coupled with a special ceremony where the incumbent chairman handed over an award to each respected former founder of the Association. The event was vibrant with many participating members sharing their vision. After the discussion with members, the Association announced the



activities and events scheduled for the second half of 2019. The year-end TFTA Member Assembly this year will be held on December 06,

2019. Regarding overseas promotion and exposure, the Association will exhibit at International Fastener Expo on September 18 and 19 to promote its members.

Complex Sorting Machine Made Simple

ZXY Technology provides sorting machines from user-oriented designs and specializes in the development and manufacture of customized optical sorting machines. 'VISION X', the company's latest invention of this year, incorporates intuitive design on the user interface. Joe Lin, President, ZXY Technology, said "The new operating sequence of VISION X enables the user to complete the desired inspection configurations with ease. We have made a complex sorting machine just as simple and convenient as using an iPhone!" The CEO added that VISION X uses a large number of graphics and icons to replace the texts on the interface, making the operation more intuitive and faster for even a newbie to quickly remember the functions and services associated with the buttons. ZXY can customize the machines as per clients' demand on sample inspection, and perform actual inspection on the required items. The new user interface has not only accurated computing algorithm, but also significantly improved operating smoothness. The setup, function adjustment and replacement of consumable supplies for VISION X are all based on ergonomic designs, and the design also incorporates cleaning and maintenance. The proper design of electric cable storage and a tidy work platform allow clients to perform simple maintenance with ease, extend machine life and reduce corporate cost expenditures.

Bi-Mirth to Steal Fastener Show in Las Vegas

An adventurer with a keen perception of market, Bi-Mirth has been involved in improving its corporate strengths. At the International Fastener Expo 2019, the company is to announce the rollout of hardwood screws, US standard Hexfast and Timberfast screws as well as the latest self-drilling screw series. It has launched an all-new QuickDrill V series and is in the process of getting ETA. The market for prefabricated buildings in the US and the EU inspired Tom Shih, Sales Manager, Bi-Mirth, to develop a series of products. Many American and European construction companies are rolling out buildings as they are cheaper



than customized buildings and the materials are more environment-friendly. There is a demand for hardwood LVL timber for prefabricated houses. Bi-Mirth has developed a new hardwood LVL screw with lower drilling torque which is less prone to cracking. The new screw 'BM HD' will be launched at the fastener fair in Las Vegas. Targeting the American market, Bi-Mirth has rolled out American-standard and patented HexFast Screws and TimberFast Screws. Both the screws have a special thread design that offers lower drilling torque and strong pullout. These screws are ICC-approved which guarantee that they are code compliant. The company will be adding new ranges to HexFast and TimberFast in ICC soon. As to the self-drilling series, Bi-Mirth has introduced self-drilling screws numbered 6, 8 and 10 this year with faster drilling time, better corrosion resistance (1000~6000 SST hours, under ASTM B116 & 16~60 cycles, under DIN 50016), and less risk of hydrogen embrittlement (can withstand temperature down to -30° C). These self-drilling screws can go through steel plates as thick as 20 mm (0.8 in.). The company is constantly making breakthroughs in European Standard screws. It wasn't long after the rollout of QuickDrill III that Bi-Mirth introduced the refined version of the edition. The latest refined QuickDrill V offers smoother driving, lower drilling torque, and minor impact on timber. The patented 'crystal thread' can increase the size of the minor diameter to create spaces for wood particles to move, while not affecting the pullout, and lower the drilling torque.



Source: Fasteners World Inc.

www.fastener-world.com.tw



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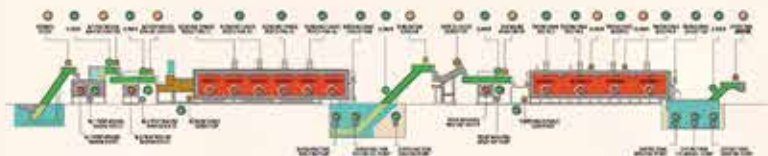


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