



P.T. International

The leading supplier for metric (and American standard) industrial power transmission products

BY CLAIR DAVID URBAIN

The International System of Units (SI), commonly known as the metric system, is the international standard for measurement. More than 95 percent of the world's population lives in countries that primarily or exclusively use the metric system.

Since 1970, the United States, Liberia and Burma are the only

nations in the world that don't use the metric system. A number of countries, including Japan and South Korea, prohibit the importation of products with any non-metric indications on their labels, and more countries are sure to follow, reports Darin Davenport, vice president of marketing and business development at P.T. International, a Charlotte, North Carolina-based supplier of industrial power transmission components and mounted ball and roller bearings.

While the rest of the world is standardized on metric equipment and specifications, the United States continues to rely on American standard specifications in most of its industries and products.

"That creates a disconnect with the rest of the world and puts U.S. manufacturers at a disadvantage if they run

equipment produced in other countries or want to supply components and products to customers outside of the United States," Davenport says.

That disadvantage is P.T. International's key point of difference. It's one of the leading suppliers of metric power transmission components in the

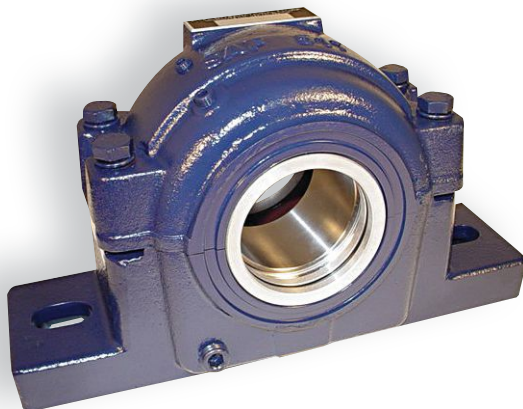
United States and also carries an extensive line of American standard dimension products.

"Ask nearly any IDC distributor what they think about first when they

hear P.T. International, and it is metric power transmission components," says Davenport. "We are considered the go-to guys for metric dimension power transmission components, but we also stock an extensive line of American standard dimension components."

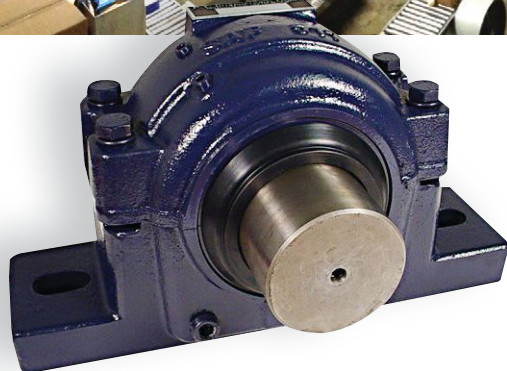


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Early on, the privately held company identified the need for metric replacement power transmission parts and production components. That was nearly 20 years ago, and its focus has created a specific and profitable niche for itself.

“We have many customers whose parent company is in Europe or another country that requires them to use metric replacement parts or components in their manufacturing processes. Logistically, it’s time-consuming and expensive to order replacement parts through the home office and have them delivered to the plant in the United States. When they find out that we can supply them with the components they need, often overnight or even same day and at a reasonable price

through their IDC Distributor, they love it,” Davenport says.

30,000 SKUs

P.T. International stocks more than 30,000 SKUs in its 80,000 sq.-ft. warehouse, including a wide variety of mounted bearings ranging from 10mm to 22” shaft diameter. “We track our order fill rates and more than 95 percent of the orders are filled from our existing warehouse stock. If we don’t have it, we will help distributors we serve to locate it. We can even offer same-day delivery if the customer needs it,” Davenport says.

It takes more than a well-stocked warehouse to meet customer needs for power transmission components; P.T. International also has 30 sales representatives across the country that assist power transmission distributors with orders. “We also have a top-notch customer service department as well as a staff of engineers in Charlotte who have extensive power transmission component experience. We design all of our components in Charlotte and work with manufacturers in 10 different countries in Asia, Europe and South America to produce them. As the popularity

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P.T. International’s warehouse in Charlotte, North Carolina, specializes in metric components but also stocks a substantial number of American standard products. It fills 95 percent of its orders from its inventory and regularly helps distributors find hard-to-locate items for customers

P.T. International’s long list of power transmission components

The Charlotte, N.C.-based power transmission manufacturer stocks more than 30,000 SKUs of metric and American standard dimension components and has an in-stock fill rate greater than 95 percent.

| Major Product Line: | Inch | Metric |
|---|------|--------|
| Mounted ball bearings | x | x |
| Mounted roller bearings | x | x |
| Bearing adapters and accessories | x | x |
| Roller chain | x | x |
| Sprockets | | x |
| V-belt Sheaves | | x |
| Spur gears and racks | | x |
| Rod ends | | x |
| Keyless locking hubs | | x |
| Tapered bushings | | x |
| Timing pulleys | | x |
| Winkel combined bearings and profiles for linear motion | | x |
| Eich spring wound bearings | x | x |
| Roll-ring chain tensioners | x | x |
| HRC Series jaw couplings | x | x |

MANUFACTURER PROFILE



P.T. International stocks a wide variety of power transmission components in metric sizes.

for metric components grows, we might be able to produce the components here, but right now, using contract manufacturers around the world is the most effective way to match supply with demand,” Davenport says.

Trend to metric components

Davenport says P.T. International predicts more metric components will be required on production equipment and in products manufactured and sold within the United States.

“If a plant in the United States uses the same metric components as its sister plant in Mexico or elsewhere in the world,

it is easier to design and support those plants,” he says.

Tom Haffner, president and co-founder of P.T. International, says adopting metric dimensions is a key part in becoming a world-class manufacturer. “If we’re going to compete as a country, we must have designs that are in metric so they will be acceptable and appreciated worldwide,” he says. “We make good products here, but the world doesn’t want them because they’re not metric. We’re slowly recognizing this and companies are realizing that we have to switch over.”

Haffner estimates that metric dimension components make up

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less than 10 percent of all U.S. manufacturing, but that is slowly changing. "American manufacturing companies are gradually beginning to see that the equipment they design will have to move beyond the legacy American standards, particularly if they want to expand globally. Many American equipment manufacturers are forced to incur the added expense of maintaining dual product lines—inch-based for the U.S. market and metric for export," he says.

The automotive industry was one of the first industries to make a complete move to metric dimensions. Over the past 20 years,




HAFFNER

all American automotive manufacturing has gone fully metric. In addition to the cars themselves, automotive assembly machinery that often comes from Europe, Taiwan, China, India or Brazil, is metric.

"Some of the companies that make these machines are located in or around Detroit, but many of them are Swiss, Italian or Japanese. The design comes out of its worldwide engineering facility, then one set of drawings is used here and in Europe to build the same machines. A piece of equipment could easily be moved out of Detroit and put in a plant in Sao Paulo, Brazil, or Mexico

City, Mexico," Haffner says.

Like the automotive industry, the food processing industry is quickly moving toward all-metric dimensions on production equipment.

Haffner cites one local customer as a shining example. "This customer builds machines that are exported to many corners of the globe. They have other divisions in Germany, India, Brazil and China. Each of these five manufacturing sites builds machines for the entire globe, minimizing duplicate production lines. That's the globalization that we are finally seeing, and that's why metric will win out in the long run." 



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