



National Machinery LLC

Strengthens Presence in China Via High Quality Forming Machine, Technology and Support



National Machinery stands as one of the largest leaders in advanced cold and warm forming machinery. 145 years up to this date, its formers are used in more than 130 countries worldwide. Its footprints are worldwide for clients' contact via its service centers and sales offices across the Americas, Europe and Asia. National Machinery is also a tech-driven innovator with nearly 800 patents in 18 countries, thanks to its "Met-MAX Innovations" division positioned to develop innovative metal net-shape forming processes. Specifically for the Chinese readers, Fastener World Magazine takes the opportunity to interview Mike Burkes (SVP Customer Support) and Jerry Bupp (VP Sales & Marketing) [herein referred to as "National"] on the company's development in China and signature products for the Chinese market.

Celebrating 145th Anniversary

This September marks National's 145th anniversary. It has been fortunate to expand in both customer support and machinery technology in recent years. On its achievements during the past years, National said: "An example is the FORMAX[®] XXV, 25mm cutoff machine with its ground-breaking robot tool changer that was introduced to the market and has been very successful." FORMAX[®] XXV is a new version of FORMAX. It combines the best features including servo controlled adjustments, expanded die-space and high production speeds.

Competitive Edge in China Market

National's wholly owned subsidiary in Suzhou City of China (NMGT) has developed into a very key part of the National family. NMGT has approximately 130 employees, many of whom have been with the company more than 10 years – something which is not so common in China. "NMGT has been focused on serving the Chinese market. Many have come to China in search of low production costs. While we certainly do recognize some lower costs there, that was never the driving factor for us in China – rather to provide high quality machines and excellent local technical support," said National.

While being proud of the quality and performance of the machines it builds in China, National said its biggest advantage for Chinese customers is breadth and depth of technical support in local language. "If there is no support for machine operators, tool designers, and toolmakers, the chances of success decrease substantially. Our colleagues in China are well-trained, and highly service-oriented. They support our customers not only at installation and startup, but also on an ongoing basis as they have questions or encounter any issues."

Signature Products: "PumaFX" & "LeanFX"

PumaFX and LeanFX produced in China by National are tailored to the high volume production of precision parts and fasteners. They have the same precision, quality, and high speeds as National's U.S.-built machines, but they contain comparatively less automation. Nonetheless, the precision and repeatability of the punch-to-die registration allow them to be reliably changed over to the next job in 45 minutes. This is still faster than most machines which boast automated "quick change". "Our Chinese customers appreciate the simplicity and lower cost of the machine, which still has the heart of a National Formax."

PumaFX is matched exactly to the needs of the local market in China. LeanFX meets the European requirements for noise control and electrical components, and has been installed in 12 different countries. At International Fastener Show China this June, National demonstrated PumaFX10M5 (5-die 10mm cold former) and Mectron MI8500 (eddy current inspection machine), both built in NMGT facility. The MI8500 can detect crack or material defects.

"Technology and Support" with a Foresight on "Industry 4.0"

National's machines are known for their technology to help customers run parts faster and better and produce net-shape parts. Its support means providing customers with everything from spare parts and rebuilds, to training and assistance to be more productive. Furthermore, National has been improving cold forming efficiency with Industry 4.0. "We identified additional useful

process data from the machine that is then shared with a MES or Load monitor system. In some cases we took existing data, but we've also added condition monitoring sensors to gain new information, that can be uploaded. We are exploring even more condition-based sensors to help predict future maintenance."

Looking ahead, National will continue to expand service footprint. "We have added local service capability in Brazil, China, Italy, Taiwan, and in California (center of the U.S. aerospace fastener industry) in recent years. Next in our plan is further strengthening in China, as well as establishing local service in Mexico." ■



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