ContiTech investing €6.2 million in Brazil

ContiTech, the world's largest specialist for rubber and plastics technology in the non-tyre rubber sector, will invest 15 million reais (€6.2 million) in the doubling of production capacity for belts at the Ponta Grossa plant, Brazil.

The 2,800-square-metre expansion of the present ContiTech plant is to be effected in two phases, with the first phase due to be completed by September 2012. The increased capacity will provide more space for the manufacture of timing belts for cars and multiple V-ribbed belts used to drive hydraulic power steering and air conditioning units, water pumps and generators. The investment is expected to increase timing belt production by 50% and V-ribbed production by 15%.

NSK bearings cut friction loss by half

NSK has announced that it has developed energy-saving bearings for high-efficiency motors that halve the friction loss of rolling bearings used in conventional products and thus contribute to a reduction of electric power consumption in high-efficiency motors. According to NSK, the friction loss results from an optimisation of bearing design.

Enhancements in the efficiency of bearings enable operators to meet the rising standards for global standards for motor efficiency. As the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) efficiency level for motors progresses to IE3 and IE4 over the coming years, the demand for bearings with low friction loss will increase. NSK claims that its bearings conform to the extremely demanding IE3 and IE4 efficiency standards of the IEC, enabling reduced power consumption of bearings in industrial motors.

Festo pneumatic grippers upgraded

Festo has launched an upgraded range of pneumatically-operated grippers that deliver up to 40% more force than current equivalents. The DHxS range replaces the current Festo HGx series of standard grippers.

The DHxS range includes parallel, three-point, radial and angular models, all in lightweight, compact dimensions with optimised gripping retention force and high reliability. To ensure that the right function and capacity are available to meet the demands of diverse applications, each gripper comes in a wide choice of sizes and stroke lengths.

The design of the new range achieves a successful balance between the need to provide cost-effective equipment and the necessity to offer low weight, high gripping forces, minimal dimensions and improved performance. All options are available with double-acting piston drives, and are effectively overload-proof, thanks to an integrated fixed flow restrictor that acts as a safety buffer.

Technology update

New SKF endoscopes speed machine inspection

SKF has launched a new series of portable, compact and easy to use, multi-functional endoscopes that are suitable for internal inspection of a wide range of machinery. The TKES 10 endoscopes are high quality instruments that provide fast and easy inspection with functions such as snapshot, video recording, picture and video review on a compact LCD display backlit screen. Combined, these features allow maintenance technicians to investigate machine condition quickly and accurately with minimum downtime.

Each TKES 10 series endoscope features a high resolution miniature camera, with up to 2x digital zoom that provides a clear and sharp full screen image via a one metre insertion tube. The 5.8mm tip diameter camera is able to show a wide field of view and is available in three variations, with a flexible, semi-rigid or articulated tip. The tube can even be inserted in water and most lubricant oils, and has a high ingress protection level of IP 67.

Assessing the safety of your flooring

TAYLOR HOBSON
AMETEK® ULTRA PRECISION TECHNOLOGIES

Slips and trips occur four times more often in the food industry, compared to the manufacturing average, and are the main reason for the relatively high overall injury rate in this sector. As a result, employers and contractors are under increasing pressure to implement safety control methods to address the problem of slips and trips since potential losses could be significant.

To help assess the safety of floor surfaces, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has developed a Slip Assessment Tool (SAT), a computer software package that allows an operator to evaluate the slip potential of pedestrian walkway surfaces. The software is free but needs to be used in conjunction with a portable surface roughness meter, which must be obtained by the assessor. Measurements are taken using the meter, the results are fed into the software and a slip risk rating is produced. This will assist in determining whether site conditions are likely to give rise to a high or low risk of slipping. The assessment can be repeated using alternative data, such as a different cleaning regime or footwear type, to produce a different theoretical slip risk rating.

The Surtronic Duo roughness meter is widely used in conjunction with the SAT Tool; it has the versatility to assess a vast range of flooring materials in the workplace, such as vinyl, linoleum, quarry tiles, terrazzo, wood, epoxy, resin, screed and smooth concrete. Flooring manufacturers are also using the Surtronic Duo to control the roughness in their manufacturing processes and meet the increasingly stringent requirements of their customers. For ease of use, the Surtronic Duo splits into two parts, allowing the measuring head to be placed on the flooring and the measurement to be made via a 'remote control'.

SAT software can be downloaded free from: ***www.hse.gov.uk/slips.***