

European News

compiled by Fastener World

NORD-LOCK GROUP

Expander Evolves from Supplier to Global Expert

Nord-Lock Group has made a large investment in its pivot business, Expander, to better serve the needs of its global customer base. The newly expanded facility in Åtvidaberg, Sweden, has increased by 130 percent to 3,500m² - making room for modern manufacturing, a premium technical centre, as well as high-volume order handling. Expander is the original solution for expanding pivot axles – supplying the aftermarket. The innovative pivot solutions are installed directly into the existing machine mounting without the need for welding or line boring, providing a permanent solution to lug wear. The company's production flow is completely digitised, enabling high quantities of customer-unique orders to leave the factory within 48 hours. Expander System has over 35 years of knowledge and experience as the original inventor of pivot pins with expanded sleeves. These pivot pioneers have now delivered over 1.5 million Expander Systems worldwide. The factory expansion will allow Expander to increase its order volume by eight and the new Pivot Performance Technical Centre will further accelerate product development and support customer needs. The site will also become more sustainable due to the factory's reduced energy consumption, improved worker environment and lower carbon footprint.

In-house Wood Construction Screws by Eurotec

Eurotec GmbH is able to supply a wide range of wood construction screws that can be used for a number of different applications including load-bearing timber frame joints, timber engineering, multiple hall constructions or renovation of ceilings. The company points out its range of wood construction screws feature high corrosion resistance; applicability in service classes 1 to 3; as well as a good resistance to mechanical loading. The screws can also be utilised for carpentry work. Eurotec's range of wood construction screws includes the Paneltwistec range, which Eurotec mentions is known for being an 'all rounder' among screws. It is available in different steel grades, head shapes, and screw tips, and each screw has special properties that are suitable and necessary according to the application. In load-bearing timber constructions, for connecting timber wood or steel wood joints, Eurotec offers its KonstruX screws. They are characterised by a full thread that increases thread extraction resistance in the components.



The specialist for fastening technology

News



Snap Instead of Screw



The patented DIRAK-SNAP-Technology (DST) creates high strength connections that are absolutely equal to screw-based solutions, but achieved with no tools at all, with installation in just seconds. The idea behind DIRAK-SNAP-Technology is incredibly simple. It uses the operating principle of a slam-latch, which is commonly found in doors for houses or rooms. It is based on a guide with tapered clamping jaws and a spring positioned in a window inside the guide. If this fastener is then pressed through a cutout, the angled insert of the clamping jaws pushes the SNAP element back like a latch bolt in the guide channel and the spring is tensioned. As soon as the height of the clamping jaws is surpassed during the insertion process, the tensioned spring presses the SNAP elements back out of the guide channel. A distinctive SNAP sound can be heard as this happens. The result is a fastener now wedged in the cutout and holds the elements to be joined together with great strength. DST withstands high strains and guarantees high strength and pull forces equal to screw connections in every regard. In addition, DST products are rattle, vibration and shock-proof. Numerous DST solutions have been tested for vibration and shock (DIN EN 61373) as well as earthquakes (GR-63-CORE, Issue 4).

Howmet's Huck® Range Force™ Battery Tool



Howmet Fastening Systems has developed the Huck® Range Force™ battery Tool, which it states is a portable powerhouse for multiple applications and industries including aerospace, solar, transportation, and construction.

The Huck® Range Force™ battery tool has an electronically adjustable pull force and a long stroke of 1.18 inch (30mm) to enable installation of structural and non-structural blind rivets, as well as two-piece lockbolts up to ¼ inch (6.4mm) in diameter.

With a quick nosepiece change and a simple one finger pull force adjustment, the tool is ready for the next style of fastener. Using a 18V lithium-ion 5.0Ah battery, the Huck Range Force industrial strength tool is highly portable, reliable and versatile. The tool is also lightweight weighing between 4.8lbs - 5.5lbs depending on battery used, as well as being ergonomic. Battery recharge time is approximately 45 minutes.



SFS Shows a Distinct Recovery in the Second Half Year

SFS Group achieved organic growth of 3.7% in the second half of 2020, driven by a distinct recovery in demand and seasonal effects. Sales for the 2020 financial year amounted to CHF 1.705 billion (€1.57 billion). SFS reports that higher production capacity utilisation and strict cost management as well as mixed effects supported profitability in the second half of the year. For the 2020 financial year an operating profit of approximately CHF 227 million was realised, which corresponds to an EBIT margin of 13.3%.



While demand in the first half of the year fell sharply in some areas due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a clear and sustained recovery in demand in various end markets and regions from the summer months onward. For instance, the automotive-related business areas, which had been heavily impacted by the collapse in demand and factory shutdowns at key customers during the first half of the year, showed a strong recovery. In the second half of the year, sales momentum also profited from successful product launches with customers from the electronics industry. Sales grew organically by 3.7% in the second half of the year compared to the previous year period. In the first half of the year, sales showed a decline of -10.4% in organic terms. For the full year, organic sales growth was -3.2%. Gross sales for the 2020 financial year amounted to CHF 1.7 billion. Sales in the Fastening Systems segment for the period under review amounted to CHF 489.7 million, which corresponds to a decline of -1.7% compared to 2019.

Despite signs of a recovery, Hilti Group's 2020 sales of CHF 5.3 billion were 9.6% below the level of the previous year. In local currencies the decline amounted to 4.3%. CEO Christoph Loos commented: "The signs of recovery further solidified over the last four months of 2020 and our sales figures have stabilised. Total sales are below the previous year's level, to the extent expected, which means that the downturn has been less severe than initially feared." Developments in the regions varied greatly, strongly influenced by the duration and extent of local lockdowns. In local currencies this resulted in only a slight overall decline in sales of 2.7% in Europe. There was a clear north-south divide, with growth in Scandinavia and Central Europe and upper single-digit declines in Southern Europe. North America was also pleasingly robust, with a local decrease of only 4.3%. Significant reductions were recorded in the Eastern Europe / Middle East / Africa region (-8.2%), Latin America (-8.1%) and Asia/Pacific (-7%), with major differences from country to country. For example, while encouraging growth was achieved in China and Russia, there was a larger slump in Southeast Asia and the Gulf States in particular. The Hilti Group expects a moderate economic recovery for the current year which will vary from region to region and depend heavily on the course of the coronavirus pandemic in the coming months.

Container Shortages Impact UK Fastener Supply Chain

A shortage of shipping containers at major global export ports has been seriously impacting fastener availability in the UK and Ireland, the British & Irish Association of Fastener Distributors warns. The crisis is also forcing up container freight costs three-fold and exacerbating other cost drivers to fuel sharp product inflation. Container shortages were the biggest disrupter according to specialist supply chain media The Loadstar on 1st December 2020. That was an assessment echoed by BIAFD importer members, who say they now have major backlogs at factories, which cannot be shipped to the UK and Ireland due to the lack of containers. The CAX, an index of container availability, was at record low levels at the end of 2020. A reading below 0.5 indicates a deficit of containers. For week 49 the reading for Shanghai Port was just 0.03 – compared with 0.53 ten weeks previously, and 0.66 in Week 6 of 2020. The indices for other global – and also European ports – also showed plunging container availability over recent weeks.

The container shortages are an indirect consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic. Emerging early from the pandemic, Chinese factories recovered production and recommenced exports to global markets. Export shipments increased ahead of the Chinese National Day holiday in October, further ratcheting during the peak season run-up to Christmas.

Containers are collected from port and road or rail freighted to companies. However, return times to ports in all import markets have significantly increased, due to coronavirus-related shortages of vehicles and drivers. Container shortages were also exacerbated by the volumes of personal protection equipment being imported. In November, the UK's main container port at Felixstowe was said to be storing some 11,000 containers of PPE ordered by the British Government. Many of these containers have now been moved to inland storage points but the containers are unlikely to be released for many months and potentially longer.

With finances hit hard by the collapse of global trade, resulting from the pandemic, shipping lines radically tightened capacity on most routes. Lack of capacity and low backhaul profitability has meant containers returning to export markets far more slowly. More lucrative transpacific routes to American markets have also taken priority for both container ships and containers over European routes.



While container manufacturers are reported to have stepped up production, output lags well behind demand, and the knowledge that the container market will eventually rebalance is a disincentive to further ramping up output. All the indications are that it will be several months before equilibrium is restored.

UK and Irish importers have faced additional challenges, due to persistent delays at Felixstowe Port, which have knocked onto other UK ports. Some carriers have applied substantial port congestion surcharges, further adding to importers' costs. More problematically, some shipping lines are by-passing UK ports to avoid delays, dropping containers at Northern European ports – which typically adds a further two weeks to lead times, placing further pressure on availability.



In addition to creating availability challenges, all of these factors are driving major increases in freight costs for importers. BIAFD importers report container freight costs tripling, without factoring in port surcharges or costs of rerouted shipments. This means an effective on-cost to products often well in excess of ten percent. Other inflationary pressures on fastener costs were already becoming evident. Asian steel prices have also increased sharply, with further increases predicted, as supply tightness is compounded by a serious accident in a major Korean steel plant. European steel lead times have also extended sharply, for some wire grades tripling to more than twenty weeks, and steel producers are expected to introduce substantial cost increases early in 2021. The British & Irish Association of Fastener Distributors represents the interests of more than 85 United Kingdom and Ireland fastener importers, wholesalers and distributors.

Lederer Takes over NORMTEC

Lederer GmbH has announced that it has taken over all shares in NORMTEC Montage- und Befestigungstechnik GmbH from Theo Förch GmbH & Co. KG.

Based in Wuppertal, Germany, NORMTEC has eleven employees and has been successfully selling stainless steel fasteners for seven years. From now on, NORMTEC will join Lederer in pursuing the goal of sustainably strengthening and further developing their position in the market for stainless fasteners.

The long-standing employee, and authorised signatory, Sebastian Ovenhausen will take over the management of NORMTEC. NORMTEC will continue to exist as an independent company at its previous location and will continue to operate as part of Lederer GmbH.



VVG to Become Honsel



As of 1st January 2021, VVG Befestigungstechnik is now known under the new name HONSEL Distribution GmbH & Co – having fully merged with the Honsel Group.

VVG and Honsel have been closely linked for a number of years – working together and sharing many resources. Alexander Siefert, managing director at VVG Befestigungstechnik, explained: “We have experienced very unusual times in the last few months, which has resulted in us changing our focus to what is important for our company’s future. With VVG and Honsel already working closely together, the natural decision was to merge VVG with Honsel so they both operate under the same brand.”



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Established in 1993, YUYAO BIAOER is a manufacturing and trading company specializing in EYEBOLT (GB789, DIN444) and HINGE.

Material: 4.6/ 8.8/ 10.9/ 12.9/ A2-70/ A4-70)

Standards: M6 - M100 (1/4" ~ 2")

The machined spherical part will remain cleaned and bright after a hot/cold forging and a complete cut process.

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We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you as our new customers.

If you are interested, please contact us.

Attn: Mrs. Lao / Mr. Ruan



Alexander added: "For the customers' perspective there will be no real changes. The company type and company number will stay the same, as will the VAT and registration numbers. Contracts and/or agreements will remain the same and customers will still contact the same person. By merging the companies we will simply become an even stronger partner for customers when it comes to fastening technology."

Honsel Group has more than 90 years of experience in the development, production and sale of high-quality fasteners and processing solutions.

Fastener Fair Stuttgart 2021 Postponed

Mack-Brooks Exhibitions has announced the postponement of Fastener Fair Stuttgart, which was scheduled to take place from 18th to 20th May 2021. The 9th edition of the show will now take place from 9th – 11th November 2021. Mack Brooks Exhibitions explains the decision was taken in light of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and following conversations with all

exhibitors and visitors that have taken place over the past weeks and months. Uncertainties around continued travel restrictions were also a contributing factor to this decision due to the truly international character of the Fastener Fair Stuttgart show.

New Improvements for RIV949

The RIV949, a hydropneumatic riveter for rivet nuts from Rivit Srl, has been designed for those sectors where work automation has become necessary, as well as fixed workstations with vertical applications. To increase the fastening possibilities and the mobility of the tool, Rivit has developed solutions that provide the riveter with the necessary support to ensure easy and precise balancing and tool handling. The triple articulated joint arm was already available in the Rivit range, but the new upgrade added supports that allow its use with the riveting tools RIV503, RIV504 and RIV506, both horizontally and vertically.

The chrome hardened steel cartesian arm with balancer for RIV949, has been projected with a new modern concept. Thanks to the movement on recirculating ball bearings, it allows a fast and precise alignment on the holes and high smoothness. Its main advantages include a multidirectional head that allows riveting in any position; great flexibility in extension and rotation; as well as a fluidity of movement and reduction of operator fatigue.

The supports for the new arm, both horizontal and vertical, have also been designed to allow its use with RIV503, RIV504 and RIV506 riveting tools. It also has a minimum – maximum radius of 500mm – 850mm, a load range of 2kg – 7kg, as well as a working height range of 200mm – 1,000mm. To ensure maximum mobility, Rivit also proposes a housing workbench for the arms and riveting tools, complete with wheels and lower shelf. ■



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