



# 'Drilling Down' on Small Screws and the ASEAN

By Chelsea Craven

**I**n the last year, the overall demand for fasteners has shown a significant increase in the United States. As manufacturing and construction becomes a greater focus for the country, the need for parts and materials rises. In turn, this rise is a positive sign for suppliers from around the world.

U.S. fastener imports have increased for the past three consecutive years, and most recently in 2012 saw an increase of nearly 11%. Imports for the year reached over \$4.6 billion worth of fasteners, that's 0.2% of all imports entering the United States! Roughly 15% of all fasteners imported to the United States are small screws, and of those small screws, 94% come from Asia. In short, Asia is the main source of small screws for the United States.

This article will focus on imports of small screws, particularly from the Southeast Asian region as well as Taiwan. We will look at past trends for specific nations and expound upon what we can expect for the small screw market in 2013. Using Zepol's trade intelligence data, we will analyze recent developments in the industry and 'drill down' on specific types of small screws.

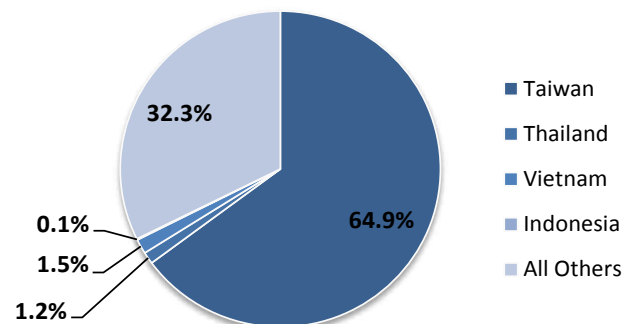
## U.S. Demand for Small Screws

Imports of small screws to the United States have followed a similar trend to the overall fastener trade. Most recently in 2012, small screw imports increased nearly 9% and reached over \$650 million. The majority of those screws are made up of self-tapping screws and a smaller portion include stainless steel screws and socket screws. In terms of demand, importers brought in an increased amount of self-tapping screws and significantly less stainless steel screws.

In the last five years, the percentage of small screws traveling from Asia to the United States has increased by about two percentage points. The increased market share may not seem that significant in percentage points, but that equates to about \$20 million more dollars spent on fasteners in Asia versus other regions.

Of all U.S. imports of small screws, about 65% originate in Taiwan. Of the Southeast Asia nations, Thailand and Vietnam are the top two suppliers of small screws. In the last six years, Zepol's data shows a shift in small screw imports; more are coming from Vietnam and less are coming from Thailand. **Figure A** below illustrates a breakdown of where small screw imports originate from.

**Figure A** U.S. Imports of Small Screws from Selected Countries, 2012

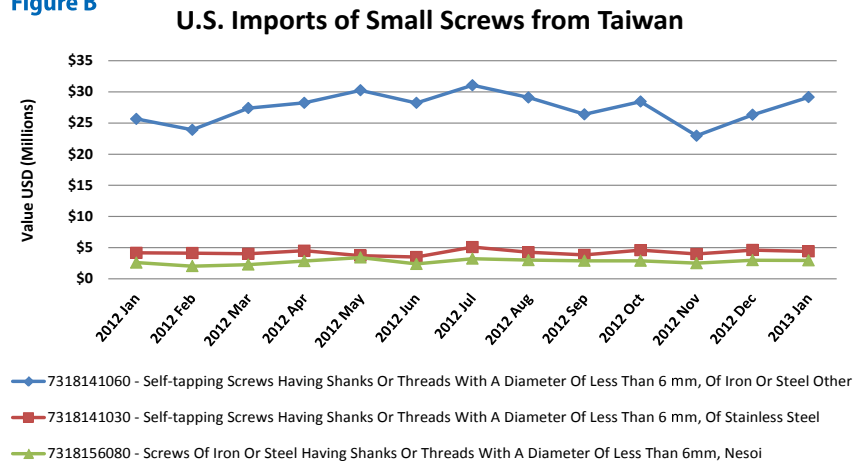




## Trade with Taiwan

As mentioned previously, Taiwan is the top source of small screws for the United States. In 2012, nearly \$400 million worth of small screws were sent from Taiwan to the United States. Self-tapping screws, of iron or steel, are the most-desired type of small screws sourced from Taiwan. January of 2013 saw the highest value of small screws sent from Taiwan since July of 2012, showing a positive start to the year. Conversely, stainless steel screws from Taiwan have decreased in the last year. **Figure B** below shows a trend of the top three screws imported from Taiwan.

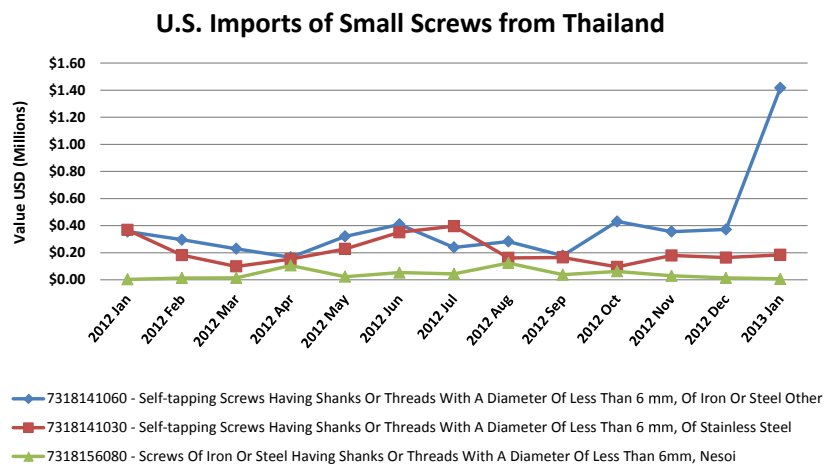
Figure B



## Small Screws and Thailand

Imports of small screws from Thailand summed to slightly above \$7 million in 2012, down from nearly \$8 million in 2011. Self-tapping screws of iron, steel, and stainless steel are the top types of fasteners coming from Thailand. Most recently, imports of self-tapping screws, of iron and steel, saw a significant jump in January of 2013. **Figure C** below exemplifies this jump. Is Thailand making a 'come-back' in 2013? Imports of stainless steel socket screws have seen a gradual decline from Thailand.

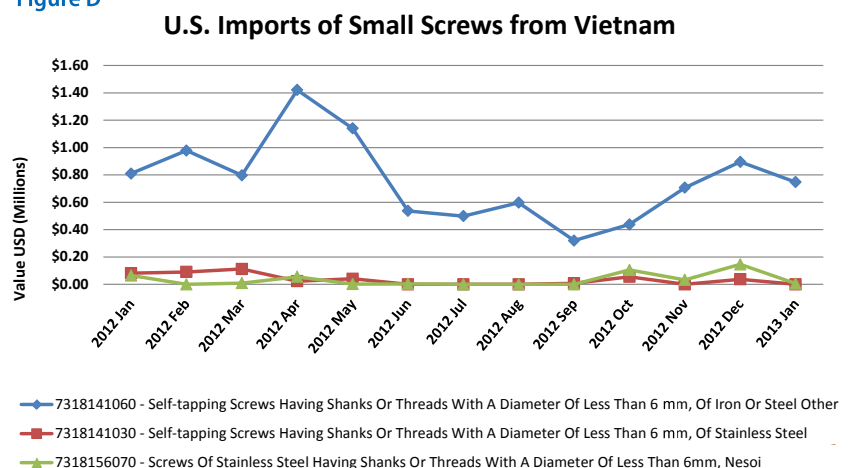
Figure C



## Growth from Vietnam

In 2007, Vietnam sent \$4.5 million worth of small screws to the United States. Just five years later, the country is sending over \$10 million worth. The majority of this growth was seen through an increase in self-tapping screws, of iron or steel. The steady upward growth for the country is a positive sign that will be likely to continue throughout 2013. **Figure D** below shows a trend of the top imported small screws from Vietnam.

Figure D



# PROTECTION & FASTENERS

**Visit our website :**

- Make your choice from **16 000 metric products**
- Check the pages for **dimensions & materials**

**Catalogue free on request**

[www.bulte.com](http://www.bulte.com)

**NEW KNURLED THUMB SCREWS**

**Bülte**

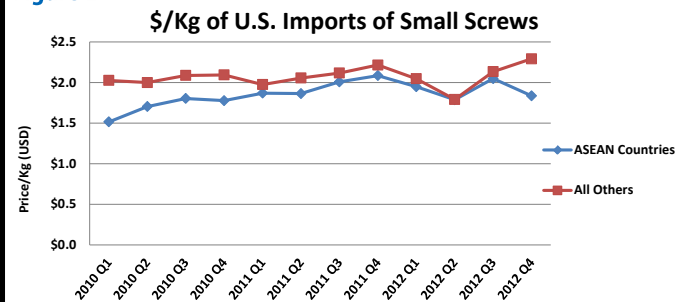
BÜLTE GmbH Kunststoffherzeugnisse  
 PO Box 1142, D-58331 Lüdinghausen  
 GERMANY · [bulte@bulte.com](mailto:bulte@bulte.com)  
 T : 0049 012591/31 54 0  
 F : 0049 012591/59 77

## Price Comparison

Even though the majority of small screws are sourced outside of the Southeast Asian region, the importance of these emerging nations should be highlighted. As price becomes more of a main focus for U.S. importers, it's only natural that the lowest-cost suppliers will receive attention. Perhaps one of the most significant takeaways of this article is the price comparison of small screws from ASEAN countries versus all other nations. **Figure E** illustrates the price of small screws for the last three years. Besides quarter two of 2012, the ASEAN countries have beaten the prices for all other nations. Most recently in quarter four of 2012, importers spent 46 cents per kilogram less when sourcing small screws from ASEAN countries versus all other countries.

Looking forward to 2013, it is likely that market share of small screws will shift more towards the Southeast Asian region, but Taiwan will still be the top supplier. As demand increases for fasteners from the ASEAN region, so too will the price.

**Figure E**



## Appendix

U.S. Imports of Small Screws from Selected Countries, by Month (Value by USD)						
Country	Taiwan	Thailand	Vietnam	Indonesia	All Others	Total
2012 Jan	\$33,917,345	\$775,719	\$962,393	\$25,083	\$19,468,605	\$55,149,145
2012 Feb	\$30,958,644	\$549,098	\$1,076,418	\$38,739	\$16,312,257	\$48,935,156
2012 Mar	\$34,899,381	\$363,931	\$917,820	\$80,350	\$17,385,006	\$53,646,488
2012 Apr	\$36,882,694	\$440,932	\$1,498,775	\$74,454	\$18,898,832	\$57,795,687
2012 May	\$38,794,988	\$612,285	\$1,182,443	\$41,426	\$17,726,867	\$58,358,009
2012 Jun	\$35,331,636	\$824,461	\$539,786	\$52,982	\$17,062,717	\$53,811,582
2012 Jul	\$40,749,774	\$723,605	\$500,675	\$56,218	\$19,934,143	\$61,964,415
2012 Aug	\$37,656,277	\$594,014	\$596,855	\$61,501	\$17,810,458	\$56,719,105
2012 Sep	\$34,342,717	\$411,265	\$326,356	\$76,547	\$17,491,762	\$52,648,647
2012 Oct	\$37,177,842	\$623,043	\$614,003	\$67,200	\$17,748,893	\$56,230,981
2012 Nov	\$30,647,467	\$593,120	\$741,581	\$66,422	\$16,259,628	\$48,308,218
2012 Dec	\$35,212,358	\$601,884	\$1,081,471	\$54,429	\$16,260,628	\$53,210,770
2013 Jan	\$38,050,356	\$1,640,417	\$752,109	\$97,155	\$18,974,936	\$59,514,973
<b>Total</b>	\$464,621,479	\$8,753,774	\$10,790,685	\$792,506	\$231,334,732	\$716,293,176

U.S. Imports of Small Screws from Selected Countries, by Year (Value by USD)						
Country	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Taiwan	\$415,813,296	\$458,612,441	\$270,101,248	\$372,469,953	\$392,928,771	\$426,571,123
Thailand	\$13,707,645	\$12,027,735	\$4,085,007	\$4,586,867	\$7,970,188	\$7,113,357
Vietnam	\$4,462,751	\$6,979,156	\$7,181,965	\$7,090,841	\$9,279,493	\$10,038,576
Malaysia	\$1,986,317	\$1,200,285	\$333,473	\$808,152	\$1,913,385	\$2,488,830
Singapore	\$1,451,749	\$931,239	\$458,871	\$650,494	\$674,348	\$729,816
Indonesia	\$334,892	\$202,662	\$49,163	\$333,182	\$354,847	\$695,351
Philippines	\$15,528	\$239,250	\$38,039	\$37,913	\$48,993	\$21,889