

Some U.S. Fastener Sales Halved Amid Covid-19

U.S. fastener executives report production and sales figures have dropped as much as 45%, according to an informal May 2020 survey conducted by GlobalFastenerNews. “If it wasn’t for the empty roads, I would barely notice the shut down,” one fastener distributor observed.

“Running the full crew full-time, but order quantities lower, so sales down around 10% vs. prior year.”

One distributor said his company sanitizes work surfaces and touch points, and work stations have been moved at least six feet apart. “I would guess that this is the new normal for a least 18 months until an inoculation is proven.” While face masks are optional, “anyone who sneezes or coughs goes home.”

The distributor is moving some inside sales reps to home offices. But another distributor said he has made no safety changes such as distancing to his operation. Few problems working with customers or suppliers were reported.

“Most companies seem to have embraced working remotely to keep business functioning as smoothly as possible given the environment we are in,” one manufacturer found. Only one said one customer is “problematic,” but added that suppliers are “very cooperative.” But sales aren’t restarting: “Nothing ramping up,” said one. “Just managing expectations while end users are shut down.”

Most responded with “wait and see” plans to attend the International Fastener Expo September 28-30 in Las Vegas or the November 8-10 Specialty Tools & Fasteners Distributors Association convention in Anaheim. “Yes, unless there is a new wave of the virus,” a distributor responded to his company participating in the two events.

There also was flat rejection of trade show participation this year. “Not likely,” noted one. “No way things will be okay by then,” said one distributor close enough to drive to both events instead of fly.



Grainger Selling Fabory to Dutch Firm

Grainger agreed to sell Fabory and its subsidiaries to Dutch capital firm Torqx Capital Partners for an undisclosed sum. Grainger acquired Netherlands-based Fabory in 2011 for \$346 million. Founded in 1947 as Borstlap & Sons, Fabory employs 1,100 to supply fasteners to more than 60,000 customers in EU markets through 44 branches in 13 countries. Torqx said it will support Fabory by investing in deep product and application expertise, in smart value-added services for its OEM and MRO customers, and in an efficient and high-quality supply chain.

Endries International Acquires All-West

Endries International Inc. acquired All-West Components & Fasteners Inc., a distributor to OEMs founded in 1978 in Seattle by CEO Rick Peterson. Terms of the deal were not disclosed. President Steve Endries commented that the “cultural and customer service philosophies that Rick & Mark have built align perfectly with the foundation at Endries. This acquisition will enhance Endries ability to grow our business with the combined expansion of our product offerings and geographic footprint that All-West brings in the Pacific Northwest.”

Peterson’s brother, Mark Peterson, joined All-West in 1982 and has been president since 2015. After eight years in fastener distribution, Rick Peterson founded All-West 42-years ago, adding up to make it a 50-year fastener career. That qualifies him as “a rusty bolt,” Peterson told GlobalFastenerNews.

Founder Bob Endries was the 1993 president of the Specialty Tools & Fasteners Distributors Association and Rick Peterson was the 2008 STAFDA president. Peterson also was the 2014-2015 president of the Pacific-West Fastener Association. Endries International is marking its 50th anniversary during 2020. The company has 825 employees across the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Europe, the Asian Pacific and China.



Fastenal Fastener Sales Continue Decline



Fastenal reported fastener sales dropped 15.3% in May, compared with a 22.5% rate of decline the previous month. Sales of other products (excluding safety supplies) fell 6%. Overall sales rose 4.4% to \$491.5 million in May, while daily sales climbed 14.8% to \$24.7 million during the month. U.S. sales gained 14.4%, while sales in Canada and Mexico fell 2.4%.

By end market, sales to manufacturing customers decreased 4.2%, and sales to non-residential construction customers were down 9.8% in May. During May, Fastenal trimmed 400 sales staff, with most of those cuts in branch and onsite personnel. The company’s overall workforce decreased 5.4% during the month to 21,034 employees. Distribution personnel shrank 14.3% to 2,478 while manufacturing personnel fell 9.8% to 625 workers. In the opening quarter of 2020, fastener sales declined 2.6% to \$449.7 million (32.9% of overall sales).



Fastener Fair USA Postponed Until 2021

Fastener Fair USA has been postponed from its July 2020 schedule to March 2021 due to the COVID-19 escalation. The 3rd Fastener Fair USA is now slated for March 23-25, 2021, at the Huntington Convention Center in Cleveland, OH, returning to the city where the inaugural event was held in 2018.



Birmingham Fastener Acquires Atlanta Rod

Birmingham Fastener and Supply Inc., Birmingham, AL, USA, has acquired Atlanta Rod and Manufacturing, a fellow domestic manufacturer of fasteners. John White will stay on as President of Atlanta Rod, joining the leadership team of Birmingham Fastener. “Atlanta Rod and Manufacturing has a long history of providing excellent service and value to its customers,” says Birmingham Fastener President, Brad Tinney, “I’m extremely excited to partner with John and his team.” “Brad and I have very similar backgrounds and share an unending passion for domestic manufacturing,” says White, “I look forward to the opportunities that joining these two companies will provide for our customers.” In the past two years, Birmingham Fastener has expanded its footprint across the USA, opening locations in New York, Iowa and Houston. Atlanta Rod, based in Lavonia, GA, USA, is the company’s latest acquisition. In these uncertain times, Brad Tinney also expresses the importance of domestic manufacturing capability.

EFC Expands with New Warehouse & Office



EFC International continues to expand, moving its Chicago branch office and warehouse to a new 64,000 ft² site at 4150 Chandler Dr., Hanover Park, IL, USA. Thomas Mansholt, VP of Operations states, “Our move enables EFC to enhance our service level by providing additional stocking programs with increased inventory space to meet both customer and

supplier needs. With 4,200 pallet locations, 26' clear height ceilings and a circular flow from receiving to inventory to shipping, we can ship products more efficiently and the facility allows for growth. The increased number of dock doors provides efficient flow for containers to be loaded for export, supporting customers for all EFC global locations.”



Dyson Acquires Accu-Tech

Dyson Corp., Painesville, OH, USA, expands its manufacturing capacity and capabilities through the acquisition of the business assets of Accu-Tech Manufacturing & Support Corp., located in Mentor, OH, USA. Dyson plans to continue operations at the Accu-Tech facility through the remainder of 2020, when it will combine the assets and employees with the Dyson operations located in the same Ohio county. All equipment and employees of Accu-Tech are expected to remain with the combined company after the transition.

MWFA Annual Fastener Show Cancelled

Nancy Rich, Executive Director, Mid-West Fastener Association (MWFA), Lake Zurich, IL, USA, reports, “As we continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation with Stay at Home Orders, company travel bans and most of all everyone’s safety, the MWFA Board has had extensive discussions regarding this year’s events. In the best interest of everyone we have made the decision to cancel the MWFA Table Top Show and Golf Outing for 2020. To be sure that we provide quality events, we will put these events on hold until 2021 when we are able to meet safely.”



ZAGO Increases Sealing Fasteners Production

ZAGO Manufacturing produces high-tech sealing fasteners for ventilator manufacturers and is ramping up production to meet heightened demand during COVID-19. The company manufactures high-tech sustainable sealing solutions and components from its headquarters in Newark, NJ, USA. ZAGO high-tech sealing screws, nuts, bolts and washers are also critical in the production of Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation Systems, akin to external blood pumps, and are in dwindling supply. ■

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