

## **Boston Gear to Celebrate 135th Anniversary**

This year Boston Gear celebrates 135 years in business. Boston Gear is a leading global supplier of quality power transmission products, serving most major industrial markets including food processing, packaging machinery and material handling. From its 193,000 square foot state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Charlotte, North Carolina, Boston Gear offers a wider range of products than any competing company in its field. Many companies worldwide rely upon Boston Gear as their single-source supplier of motion control products.

Boston Gear currently manufactures more than 50,000 products and employs 180 people at its Charlotte facility. An additional 60 sales associates sell Boston Gear products globally.

### **An Industry Leader and Innovator from the Beginning**

Boston Gear was founded in 1877. From its humble beginning as a small machine shop manufacturing gear-cutting machines, the company rapidly positioned itself as a dominant, pioneering leader in its field. Early on, Boston Gear introduced the concepts of gear standardization and stock gears – innovations of enormous benefit to power transmission designers, specifiers and users.

By 1929, Boston Gear had over 400 employees and was established as the world's largest manufacturer of stock gears. And the company pioneered the concept of enclosed drives, a category it still dominates with dependable, high-performance products such as Worm, Helical and Bevel Gear drives.

The spirit of innovation that vaulted Boston Gear into a position of industry dominance many decades ago is still alive and well. Products like the new 2000 series gear drives and gear motors help Boston Gear maintain its position as the go-to company in its field. The 2000 series, a collaboration between Boston Gear and sister company Bauer Gear Motor, sets new standards in performance and design flexibility, and offers fast, easy installation and low maintenance requirements. And the 700 series speed reducers and gear motors, now available in both cast iron and stainless steel, have long been the industry standard for food processing and material handling applications.

### **A Survivor**

Though Boston Gear has been an innovative leader in its field for more than a century, the company has endured some tough times. The company survived a national depression in the late 1800's, the Great Depression of the 1930's, numerous recessions, and several changes of ownership. And during World War II, the company worked round the clock, 24-7, contributing to the U.S. war effort. In appreciation, the employees of Boston Gear were awarded the Army-Navy Production Award for high achievement in 1943.

More recently, Boston Gear has faced radical changes in the global marketplace. "Just 10 years ago we competed primarily with companies based in North America," said Vice President & General Manager Ed Novotney. "But now we face competition from companies worldwide."

### **What's The Secret?**

Any person who lives to the ripe old age of 100 is inevitably asked about the secret to longevity. But since not many companies survive to their 100th birthday, that's a question that's also worth asking of a company like Boston Gear.

Carl Christenson, President & CEO of Boston's parent company, Altra Industrial Motion, has an answer to that question: "We're an extremely customer focused company," Christenson said. "Our workforce is committed to satisfying the customer. We service the marketplace with above average industry performance standards in quality, delivery, and product innovation. And our products are always competitively priced."

Christenson explained that the driving force behind their record of consistently providing world-class customer service is the Altra Business System, a unique company-wide business management system. "Focusing upon the customer and continuously striving to align quality, delivery, and cost with our customers' wants and needs - that's the Altra Business System," Christenson said. "Because of our absolute dedication to customer satisfaction, profit and sales growth take care of themselves."

Longtime customer Joe Brisson of Omni Metalcraft agrees that Boston Gear consistently hits the mark with superior customer service. "Boston Gear has been and continues to be an extremely good business partner," Brisson said. "We specify Boston Gear reducers as standard equipment on our machinery, and we can always count on great customer service and excellent product performance. We can typically find what we need from their vast catalog of product offerings, but if not, they will engineer a solution to meet our specific requirements."

Of course, world-class customer service is not possible without world-class employees. "It's all about your people," Ed Novotney said. "A company is no better than all of the people who dedicate years, even decades of their lives to the success of that company. With good people, a company can accomplish anything - even 135 years of success."

And companies, just like people, can become set in their ways, resistant to the changes required to remain leaders in their field. Companies that don't have the flexibility and foresight to change with fluctuating market demands and technological progress are not likely to celebrate a 100th anniversary, much less a 135th anniversary.

The ability to change with the times must be part of a company's culture, as it is with Boston Gear. "We reinvest a fixed percentage of sales revenue each year in continuously upgrading our manufacturing equipment and processes," Novotney said. "These funds are also used for new product development and new product launches."

Novotney also noted that the company operates to a strategic plan that is updated annually, helping to keep the company's vision and strategy aligned with market realities.

### **Looking Forward**

One thing that people and companies have in common is that it's fairly rare for either to live to the age of 100. When either makes it to that age, it's quite an achievement, and a cause for celebration. This year, Boston Gear will certainly be celebrating its past, but it will be doing so with an eye to the future.

After all, this year's anniversary signals that Boston Gear has been doing business longer than such venerable companies as I.B.M., Coca-Cola, General Electric and Ford. It's been around longer than the light bulb, radio, movies, automobiles, and the airplane. 135 years brings lots of changes.

But a company with such a storied past surely holds a claim to the future, and Boston Gear looks forward to many years of eclipsing past achievements with future successes.