

# Flexible Innovation

**In today's production environment, customers want tasks to be carried out as quickly as possible and according to precise instructions. This means that manufacturers often have to make parts that are not planned. Flexibility has become an important aspect in heat treatment and IPSEN International has found a hot solution in MOVITRANS®.**

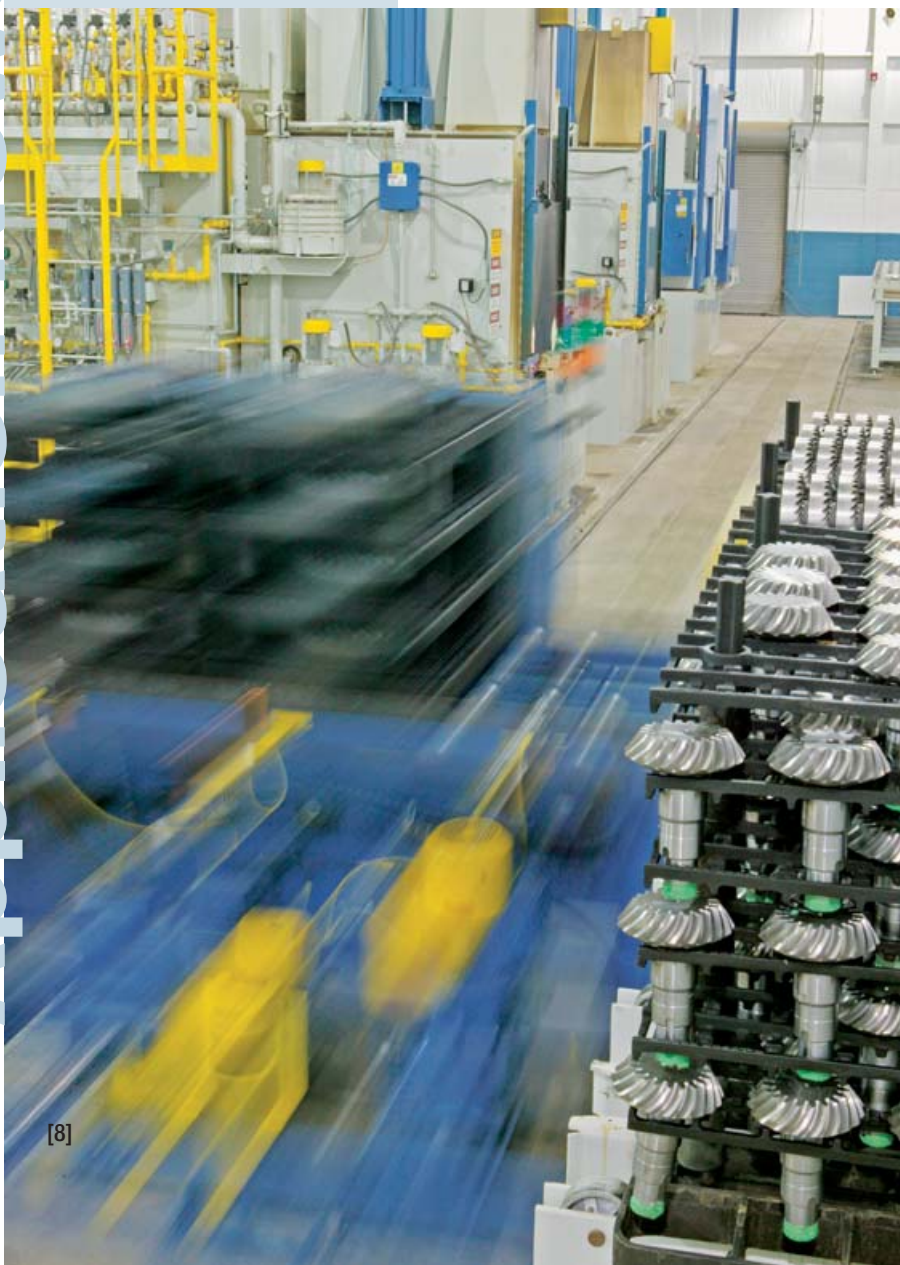
The U.S. company, IPSEN Industries, was founded by Harold Ipsen in 1948 to design and manufacture systems for atmosphere heat treating equipment. Today, IPSEN International offers customers complete solutions for heat treatment worldwide. The company offers reliable furnace technology and focuses on optimized process technology as the basis for efficient utilization of heat treatment systems. IPSEN relies on "complete solutions from a single source," says Tim Adams, IPSEN sales representative for the Southeast. "In this regard, IPSEN's mission parallels SEW-EURODRIVE's. Both SEW and IPSEN have deep German roots. We've been able to mesh with the SEW-EURODRIVE products manufactured in Germany to bring

quality products to the U.S.—and to the rest of the world.

One such example is a project that we recently completed using MOVITRANS® contactless energy transfer. This project has it all—from mechanical components to electrical components and software to lasers and exact positioning—it is truly state-of-the-art technology."

## On-time pickup and delivery

IPSEN cooperated with SEW-EURODRIVE in a U.S. pilot project using MOVITRANS® to develop a fully automatic heat treatment system for a company that wanted to automate all its processes to become more competitive. The system calibrates



the furnace to receive the load at a specific time. A fully automated cart, powered by MOVITRANS®, travels to the right spot to handle the entire process from dispatch of material all the way to the furnace and back. MOVITRANS® does not need any festooning or overhanging cabling. It is a compact system routed in the floor that is at the heart of a solution for a multi-faceted challenge. Adams states that MOVITRANS® represents enormous labor savings. "The heat-treating

process now requires only one person, the operator, who simply stages work as it goes in to the heat-treat process and comes back out. And we certainly have the advantage of flexibility. Flexible process times and loads are a function of how the system, powered by MOVITRANS®, handles the staging work.”

### Sustainable value

Costs are a decisive factor in all parts of the world these days. Global competition makes most manufacturers look for low-cost alternatives. But the price customers pay for a system and the value they get out of it are often two totally different calculations. Adams estimates that the new multi-



cellular equipment used in heat treatment is possibly three times the cost of traditional equipment. But the return is exceptional when looking at processes, product quality and speed—and ultimately for customers as well. Customers pay a higher price for products and systems because the return is so high. This is the decisive point. MOVITRANS® and some of these high-end products are essential for the financial success of a company. “It no longer pays off to buy the cheapest prod-

ucts,” says Adams. “You only discover the real value by considering complete systems. Companies that understand this principle today will be more successful in the future. Companies may think that they are spending a lot on machines and systems but when the system is made up of a good mix of technologies, they will receive a lot in return. SEW-EURODRIVE has always understood this principle and MOVITRANS® is a classic example of such an approach. SEW looks ahead five or ten years and makes the important decisions now. SEW is investing a lot to expand the production at their Lyman, SC plant and the investments are reflected in the products and systems they deliver.”



### A smaller world

Adams states that IPSEN considers this commitment to innovation and investment in technology as critical. “It will be the United States and Germany together with other markets in Europe that will supply products of a higher quality to meet technical demands. Low-cost products will still be developed in other parts of the world. And it will be important to have both. If a project calls for

IPSEN to deliver a low-cost product to a customer, then we can certainly provide this product because we are a global player. We are, however, able to reach greater productivity with a higher-quality product such as MOVITRANS®. Products like these will always have a higher level of integrity and complexity. They help improve the financial performance of any company. This means such products will always have to be around so that our other products can survive. You have to serve both ends of the price range. This approach will let you offer a wide range of products. It has

taken about eight to ten years for us to recognize that continents have to get in touch and exchange information,” summarizes Adams. “I think the world will become much smaller because of it.” ■