

Ready for the future: Digital innovation with tribo-plastics from igus

Cologne company igus GmbH increases its sales by 17 per cent to 690 million euros

motion plastics continue to be in demand worldwide. In 2017 igus GmbH increased its sales by 17 per cent to 690 million euros. At the same time, significant investment was made in product innovation, delivery capability and digitisation. The Cologne supplier will continue on this path in 2018 in order to help its customers be even more competitive in the global environment.

At Hannover Messe 2018, igus again gave an impressive demonstration that today's tribo-polymers have long been more than just grey, unremarkable plastic parts. The world of motion plastics is varied and multi-faceted: from individual robot joints with which cost-effective robots can be built, 3D-printed double gears that can be configured online, through to energy chains whose status is monitored continuously during ongoing operation. Applications in which the high-performance plastics range from machines in semiconductor production, or in more than 1,000 STS cranes from Antwerp to Shanghai, or in amphibious vehicles that operate in the north pole. The clear and constant objective is to achieve technical improvements and reduce costs through the use of high-performance plastics for moving applications. These advantages are being enjoyed by more than 200,000 customers worldwide. With these motion plastics, igus achieved sales of 690 million euros in 2017, a rise of 17 per cent over the previous year. Out of the total sales, 53 per cent was achieved in Europe, 30 per cent in Asia and 17 per cent in America and Africa. The number of employees rose to 3,800.

Large investments in worldwide logistics

In order to be able to quickly supply and service its worldwide customers locally, igus significantly expanded its global production and storage capacities in North America, Asia and Europe last year. In the USA, a start was made on enlarging the factory by a further 5,000 square metres while in Japan, Poland and India, the factory floor space was doubled. At the Chinese site in Shanghai, igus also

began construction of a new facility, which will have around 22,000 square metres of floor space and be completed in 2019. The sales subsidiaries in Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, France, Austria and Spain were also enlarged last year to support the growth. But at the headquarters site in Cologne-Porz-Lind, igus also continued to invest heavily in order to be able to quickly supply its customers with their plastic parts. Last year alone, around 100 new injection-moulding machines were commissioned and the logistics capacities were expanded considerably.

Digitisation makes companies fit for the future

The same investments apply to the IT infrastructure, for which investments were increased by a factor of 4.5 compared to 2014. The aim is to make all igus products configurable and calculable online and then manufacture them automatically with digital support for all aspects of our operations - from order processing and production to maintenance and service provision. This digitisation has now become a reality at igus and goes hand in hand with the over 50 years of plastics experience and data from the igus test laboratory, which is 2,750 square metres in size and is therefore the industry's largest of its kind. "Thanks to our extensive research, we have succeeded in making it possible for users to perform calculations about moving machine elements such as plain bearings, linear bearings, gears and even cables made of plastic. This is unique in the market at the present time", says Frank Blase, CEO of igus GmbH. Thanks to these online tools, engineers can quickly and easily find the igus product they need anywhere and anytime and reliably calculate its service life in their individual applications - all of this can be done online free of charge and without registration.

At the same time, digitisation is also being incorporated into the products themselves. With the "isense" family of products now in its product range, igus has made it possible to make energy chains, cables, linear guides and slewing ring bearings intelligent using sensors and monitoring modules. In this way, customers can plan maintenance work reliably and predictably. During operation, they detect the amount of wear and indicate when repair or replacement is necessary. Thanks to networking using the igus communication module (icom), online status indication or alarm signalling is possible via PC or smartphone. This also enables direct integration into the company-wide infrastructure. With this intelligence based on test data, igus is establishing

predictive maintenance into its components. As the requirements of different users vary considerably, igus will be showcasing not only new products at the trade fair but also brand new isense concepts - from a pure standalone solution to a fully integrated online one.

Fascinating tribo-ideas for new application areas

The plastics expertise, testing and uninterrupted development of tribo-plastics are continually opening up new possibilities for igus in completely new application areas. Low-cost robotics is a good example of this. robolink Apiro, which igus is presenting at this year's Hannover Messe, is a completely new kind of lubrication-free and maintenance-free low-cost articulated joint unit for robotics applications. This makes it possible to implement extremely complicated movements and machine concepts easily and cost-effectively with just a few elements – from the simple linear robot to complex humanoid and animatronic robots. But in many other areas, the possibilities of tribo-plastics continue to be enormous. Our e-chain systems are a good example. Extremely small energy chains guide cables in cars safely and reliably while large e-spools are used to move stages in theatres and opera houses. And where steel chains are used, more and more customers are moving to plastic e-chains, for example in the offshore industry. However, this is not limited to metal chains but also other forms of energy supply equipment such as festoons, cable reeling drums and busbars are increasingly being replaced with energy chain systems. igus offers an all-round service: from online configuration and service life calculation for a single component to worldwide assembly and installation of turnkey systems.

PRESS CONTACT:

Shery George

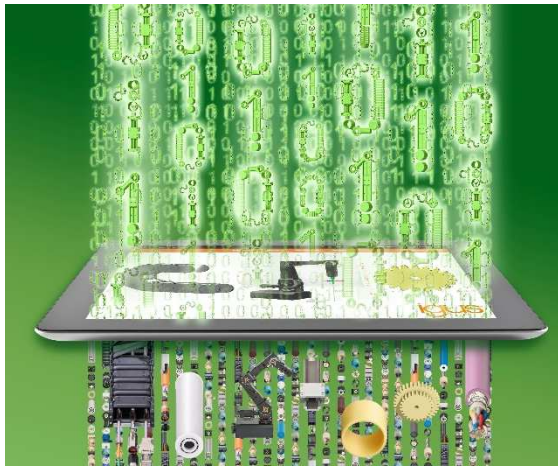
igus (India) Private Limited
36/1, Sy. No. 17/3
Euro School Road,
Dodda Nekkundi Industrial Area - 2nd
Stage
Mahadevapura Post
Bangalore - 560048
Phone : +91-80-45127827 (Direct)
Cell : +91-9379517885
sgeorge@igus.in
Visit us on www.igus.in

ABOUT IGUS:

igus GmbH is a globally leading manufacturer of energy chain systems and polymer plain bearings. The Cologne-based family business has offices in 35 countries and employs around 3,800 people around the world. In 2017, igus generated a turnover of 690 million euros with motion plastics, plastic components for moving applications. igus operates the largest test laboratories and factories in its sector to offer customers quick turnaround times on innovative products and solutions tailored to their needs.

The terms "igus", "chainflex", "CFRIP", "conprotect", "CTD", "drylin", "dry-tech", "dryspin", "easy chain", "e-chain", "e-chain-systems", "e-ketten", "e-kettensysteme", "e-skin", "flizz", "iglide", "iglidur", "igubal", "manus", "motion plastics", "pikchain", "readychain", "readycable", "speedigus", "triflex", "plastics for longer life", "roboLink", and "xiros" are protected by trademark laws in the Federal Republic of Germany and internationally, where applicable.

Caption:



Picture PM2218-1

Lubrication-free tribo-plastics and digital intelligence: two sides of the same coin. Together, they offer predictable, reliable, safe and cost-saving motion in industry. (Source: igus GmbH)