CHANGES

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Welcome to the new *Gear Technology*. With this issue we begin bringing you a new look—a new cover, new graphics, a new, broader and more inclusive editorial focus. Our goal is to be an even better resource for the entire gear industry.

To our loyal readers who have told us how much they value the "old" *Gear Technology*, please be reassured that we will continue to bring you high-quality research articles that cover the latest in gear design and manufacturing advances. At the same time, we will be expanding our coverage and making both our graphics and editorial more "reader-friendly."

As we have prepared this first issue of the "new" *Gear Tech*, our focus subject—computers and gear manufacturing—has been resonant of our situation here. Just as the changing times and needs of our readers have demanded that we change the way we do things, the changing times, technology and demands of the marketplace require that gear manufacturers and designers let go of some comfortable, even cherished, practices to keep up with the competition.

WAITING FOR THE RATE OF CHANGE TO SLOW

is to wait for a bus that will never arrive.

In our conversations with some of you over the last few weeks, we have heard the same refrain: The successful gear manufacturer today will produce gears faster, more efficiently, perhaps in smaller lot sizes, and at lower costs than ever before. And to meet these goals, these manufacturers will integrate the computer even more thoroughly into their total business environment.

While the computer revolution has come more slowly to the gear industry than to some other areas of manufacturing, it has indeed arrived. Ready or not, cybergearing is here. The question no longer is whether we should consider integrating computers into our manufacturing processes, but when, how and which ones. Even for those among us for whom the computer manufacturing revolution is old news, the rapid developments in both CNC hardware and software demand constant watching.

And that's the rub. Computer technology seems to change faster than a Pentium chip can process data, and in an industry where a machine upgrade can cost a hundred thousand dollars or more, nobody wants to be stuck in an obsolescence backwater six months down the road. On the other hand, waiting for the technological change to slow down before upgrading is to wait for a bus that's never going to arrive.

But there are solutions. They're not always simple, neat, tidy or risk-free, but they're there. In this issue, we hope to help you sort through the megabytes of information on computerized gear design and manufacturing so you can arrive at the solution that's best for your particular situation.

Change, even when it's for the better, is never comfortable. The learning curve is frequently deeper, more expensive and harder to navigate than we first thought. But it can be done. The companies featured in this issue have done it. With intelligent planning and care, you can do it too.

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