



# Reflections

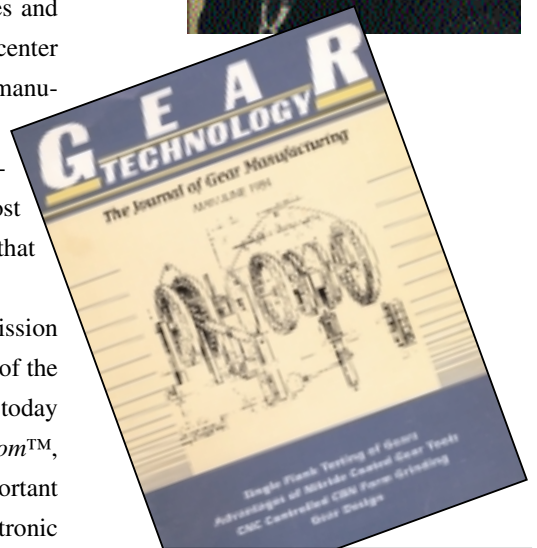
When a man looks into a mirror, the image reflects who he is today. But it also reveals who he used to be. Although appearances change, many of the underlying characteristics remain the same. The same is true with *Gear Technology*, as we celebrate our 20th anniversary and reflect on who we are. The ideas we started with—our focus on quality, our dedication to helping our readers be better at their craft, our commitment to being the gear industry's information source—are still clear in the reflection. But at the same time, many of those characteristics have grown and matured.

In my first editorial back in 1984, I made several promises to our readers. First and foremost, *Gear Technology* would be a technical resource for the gear manufacturing industry. It would include technical papers and articles from around the world. These would show how to solve specific problems, explain complicated technologies and describe cutting-edge techniques. *Gear Technology* was intended to serve as a center of information concerning research, ideas, experiments and processes in gear manufacturing and to serve as a conduit for productivity-enhancing technology between suppliers and users. We aimed to provide the very highest quality product, using the highest quality paper, printing and content, and to establish the most accurate mailing list of gear industry professionals throughout the world. All of that is still in the reflection.

But over the years, much has changed as well. For example, our original mission of being the industry's information source expanded dramatically with the rise of the Internet. In 1996, we launched *The Gear Industry Home Page*™, which today receives 30,000 visitors a month. In 1997, we launched *powertransmission.com*™, which today receives 40,000 visitors a month. Both of these websites are important information sources for the gear industry. In 2003, we launched *E-GT*, the electronic version of *Gear Technology*. Now with more than 3,500 subscribers in more than 60 countries, *E-GT* has expanded our reach even farther around the world.

Our commitment to quality has also matured. In 1996, we became the only publication serving the gear industry with a mailing list audited by an outside source. When advertisers see the logo of BPA International, our independent circulation auditor, they know that we have gone through a lot of extra steps and expense to qualify our mailing list. Those extra steps help ensure that we mail the magazine to people in the gear industry and—most importantly—that the recipients want to receive it. Our qualified subscribers have all requested the magazine, most of them within the past year.

Over the years, we've also added technical editors and instituted a formal review process for articles that appear in our pages. Much of what you read here is reviewed and approved by several sets of expert eyes before you see it. For each issue, we rely



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on the expert advice and experience of Bob Errichello, Don McVittie, Bob Smith and Dan Thurman—four of the most knowledgeable people in the gear industry. We do everything possible to ensure that what you read is technically sound, balanced and applicable to your jobs as designers, manufacturers, engineers, testers and buyers of gears and geared products.

Over the last 20 years, we've seen tremendous change in those jobs. Since 1984, virtually every aspect of gear manufacturing has changed, with much of that change coming through the incorporation of computer technology.

Twenty years ago, most gear manufacturers were still using manual machines. Even the early versions of CNC gear machines only incorporated one, two or three axes of control. Now 6- and 7-axis machines are standard. Today, software runs everything, from our engineering and production to our accounting and sales.

But there have been plenty of changes in the physical aspects of gear manufacturing as well. I'm talking about processes like dry cutting, hard honing, hard cutting, electronically-controlled guideless shapers and other things made possible by advances in tool coatings, carbide materials, rigid machine tools, faster spindles, more powerful controls and the like. Machine tools and cutting tools have changed to allow greater and greater productivity.

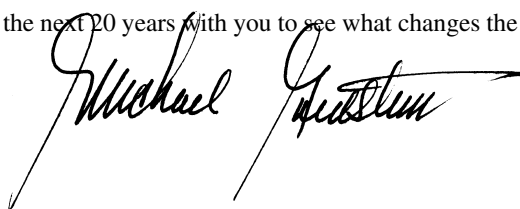
For example, I recently read in the annual report of American Axle & Manufacturing Inc. that its Detroit facility used to employ 300 wet-cut manual gear cutting machines for manufacturing ring gears and pinions. Those machines have been replaced by just 50 dry-cutting CNC machines, freeing up 30,000 square feet of factory floor space and reducing the distance each gear travels in the plant by 1,700 feet.

Also, many of the gears that were cut in 1984 are now manufactured using other materials and methods, including plastic injection molding and powdered metal manufacturing.

Aside from those changes, the landscape of our industry has changed dramatically, mostly through increased globalization. Many companies have focused on their core competencies and are competing in more narrow niches. Others have used globalization as an opportunity to adapt and change, forming partnerships and establishing locations around the world to expand product offerings and increase their geographical coverage.

Indeed, much has changed in the gear industry, and it will continue to do so. And so will *Gear Technology*. Our mission of being the gear industry's information source remains the same, but we're not done evolving yet. You're going to see some exciting changes in our magazine in the near future.

I am both happy and proud that we have kept our focus as the gear industry's information source and have to thank a dedicated staff, more than 12,000 appreciative readers—many of whom have read and saved every issue—and our extremely supportive advertisers. I look forward to spending the next 20 years with you to see what changes the coming years will bring.



Michael Goldstein, Publisher & Editor-in-Chief