

# IMTS 2004: Recovery in the Gear Pavilion

Tom Lang liked what he saw in the Gear Generation Pavilion at IMTS 2004. Standing in his booth, Kapp Technologies' vice president/general manager talked with many attendees during the show and afterward said: "We had an increase of both quality and quantity of visitors."

IMTS '04 hadn't, by any means, recovered from America's economic recession in 2001 and its subsequent, erratic recovery. Attendance had plummeted from 100,000 at IMTS 2000 to 85,000 at the '02 show, but it was stable at 86,000 at this IMTS. In the Gear Pavilion, it appeared more than stable. Several gear industry exhibitors reported attendance was up at their booths compared with IMTS '02 and had reactions similar to Lang's.

"This experience surpassed 2000 and 2002," said Mark Hiscock, vice president—American sales for Gleason Corp. "Attendance was up about 16 percent, with more serious inquiries and discussion/optimism for future programs. We actually closed orders on seven machines at the show."

## IMTS BY THE NUMBERS

	IMTS 2000	IMTS 2002	IMTS 2004
<b>Exhibitors</b>	<b>1,300+</b>	<b>1,300+</b>	<b>1,200</b>
<b>Space Occupied</b>	<b>1.4 million sq. ft.</b>	<b>1.2+ million sq. ft.</b>	<b>1+ million sq. ft.</b>
<b>Attendees</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>85,000</b>	<b>86,000</b>

## New Gear Shaping Machine from Bourn & Koch

The Fellows HS650 gear shaping machine from Bourn & Koch Inc. was one of the new machines attracting interest at IMTS '04.

"There was quite a bit of interest there," says Bourn & Koch president Tim Helle, "and we found a number of quality leads."

The gearless gear shaper has 50% fewer parts than its predecessors and is compatible with the previous tooling, Helle says. It contains a gearless CNC guide designed to match the Hydro-stroke's high stroking speed with a high performance rotary action.

The gear shaper has a GUI interface that allows users to input gear geometry and then view the construction of the physical workpiece on the screen. The gear shaper is easily movable in a two-pick package. Its complete machine enclosure has a slop chip evacuation surface and a modular, multiple platform package.

For more information, contact Bourn & Koch of Rockford, IL, by telephone at (815) 965-4013 or on the Internet at [www.bourn-koch.com](http://www.bourn-koch.com).





## A Bigger Phoenix from Gleason

The 600 HC CNC gear cutting machine from Gleason Corp. is a bigger version of the earlier Phoenix 275 HC and has additional bevel gearing capacities.

Dave Melton, communications manager, says this new machine can open the company up to new gearing markets like off-highway gears.

Among its attributes are its cutting capability for gears as large as 600 mm and a monolithic column design that places the operator in close proximity to the cutter and work spindle. Also, the machine takes up 35% less floor space than comparable models in its class, according to the company's press release.

The 600 HC uses Gleason's machine manager software and runs on a Fanuc I 60i CNC controller that simplifies setup and operation in a Windows environment.

In addition, shorter axis travels as well as higher feeds and speeds of the direct drive spindle, improve both wet and dry cutting applications and cycle times when compared to other models in the class, according to Gleason's press release.

With one machine already en route to a new owner, the 600 HC has been 18 months in the works, from the time of its first prototyping. Gleason is still testing some aspects, says Melton, but is excited about this entry in the gear market.

For more information, contact Gleason of Rochester, NY, by telephone at (585) 473-1000.



## New Gearhead from Danaher Motion

The Micron Gearhead RediMount Motor Mounting System from Danaher Motion features a three-step mounting procedure that allows all Micron gearheads to connect to many available motors.

Product manager Howard Horn says, "Basically, the

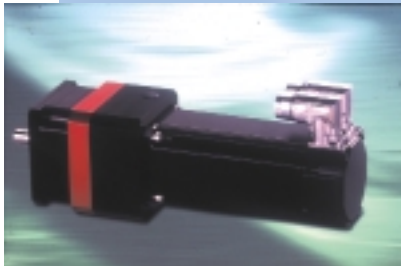
RediMount is easy, error-free and allows the gearhead to be mounted to any motor on today's market. The modular design allows mounting kits to be maintained in the field and

permits the same mounting kit to be used across Micron's entire family of products."

A specially designed input housing and sleeve that can accommodate any motor mounting dimensions are key to the gearheads' easy mounting, Horn says.

In addition, the mounting system has a self-aligning hub that maintains concentricity between the motor shaft and gearhead. Inside this, a pre-installed pinion eliminates normal pinion setting procedures.

For more information, contact Danaher of Wood Dale, IL, via [Howard.Horn@DanaherMotion.com](mailto:Howard.Horn@DanaherMotion.com).



## New Inverter Duty Gearmotors from Baldor

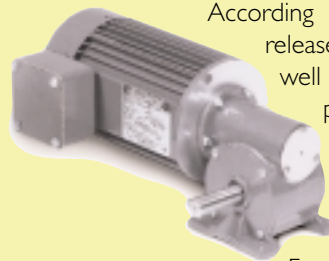
Baldor introduced its new inverter duty gearmotor line at IMTS '04.

Eric Frey, gear product specialist at Baldor, says, "These units require absolutely no maintenance and are permanently lubricated with synthetic oil. Right-angle gearmotors feature our exclusive internal oil expansion chamber that allows our gearmotor to be mounted in any approved position without having to relocate a breather vent."

The induction-hardened, ground steel worm and bronze gear provide a smoother operation, cooler running and increased efficiency, Frey says.

According to the company's press release, a range of gear ratios as well as both right angle and parallel shaft configurations are available to meet application needs.

For more information, contact Baldor of Fort Smith, AR, by telephone at (479) 646-4711 or on the Internet at [www.baldor.com](http://www.baldor.com).



David Goodfellow echoed the comment. "We did receive several machine orders during the show, which did not happen in '02," said the president of Star SU LLC. "The decisionmakers were there."

Francis J. "Butch" Wisner, president/COO of Nachi Machining Technology Co., was in his company's booth, but he had only a limited amount of time to observe attendance. His reason, though, could be another measure of good activity in the Gear Generation Pavilion: "I was in meetings virtually the entire show," he said. "There were more project discussions and specific application work accomplished during this show."

Liebherr Gear Technology Co. differed in its IMTS opinion. "The show was fair," said Reinhold Cordella, a regional sales manager for Liebherr. "Better than in '02, but not as good as in '98 or 2000."

Interest in gear-making equipment also extended to the Tooling & Workholding Systems Pavilion in Hall



Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley visited the Gear Generation Pavilion at this IMTS.



IMTS attracted 86,000 visitors this year.

E, in the basement of McCormick Place's lakeside building. LMT-Fette manufactures a number of tooling products, but its president, Brian Nowicki, said the company had serious customers concerning its gear cutting products.

Nowicki added there was serious customer interest in all of LMT Fette's product areas—"Far better than that of '02."

And according to accounts, the

attendees included large percentages of serious customers.

"Over 120 customers expressed interest in receiving additional information about our products after the show," Lang said. "Of those, we expect at least 20-25 percent to be potential future sales."

That translates to about 24-30 potential customers, about the same as Wisner expected. He said Nachi probably had

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30 very serious customers during IMTS '04 for gear and spline cutting equipment.

Marshall Krumpe, president of LeCount Inc., estimated that his company had about 30 percent serious customers, including "very serious conversations" with six customers and new interest for more tooling sales among some current ones.

"LeCount is a small company with a niche market," Krumpe said, "so it does not take a lot of show traffic to make for a good experience."

In Hall E, according to Nowicki, LMT-Fette had double the number of sales leads compared with the '02 show, with Sept. 9 alone bringing in 66 percent of the company's '02 total.

Ross Deneau, vice president-manufacturing for gear cutting tool manufacturer A/W Systems Co., was relieved by his estimate of the show's good days: 25 percent serious customers, 75 percent browsers. He recalled the '02 mix as 5 percent serious customers, 95 percent browsers—"It was bad."

Moreover, the good activity inside the show seemed to mirror the companies' business outside it.

"Busy show, busy year," Hiscock said. "The activity at the show supported what we have seen in sales and what other economic indicators have been suggesting. Orders are up significantly from the last couple of years."

Likewise, Cordella said IMTS '04 largely reflected Liebherr's business: "It's increasing, but at a slow rate."

"Business is definitely up since '02," Goodfellow said. "The general gear industry is up, especially in the higher



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The Gear Generation Pavilion at IMTS 2004.

## Star SU and LeCount Form Distribution Agreement

Star SU and LeCount Inc. announced an agreement for the sales and distribution of expanding mandrels, spline mandrels, concentric rings and custom mandrels in North America through Star SU sales.

Marshall Krumpe, president of LeCount, explains, "This is similar to them taking on a new product line like what they did for Bourn & Koch or Fellows, except that we're a lot smaller. We're a little niche market that they're embracing as a sales opportunity. We have high hopes that we can work well together."

The kick-off date for this partnership was Oct. 1, although LeCount shared booth space with Star SU at IMTS in September. Training has begun for the sales team, which will soon be making joint calls. In addition, the LeCount sales brochures are downloadable from the Star SU website.

Star SU of Hoffman Estates, IL, is the U.S. sales and manufacturing unit of Samputensili S.p.A. These companies represent gear machine and gear tool manufacturing producers of gear cutting, finishing, and tooling equipment.

LeCount, based in White River Junction, VT, manufactures mandrels and custom tooling for holding bore-type cylindrical workpieces for inspection.



Chip Brettell, founder & CEO of LeCount, David Goodfellow, president of Star SU, and Brad Lawton, chairman of Star SU, (left to right) are partners in a new distribution agreement.

## New Measuring Machine from Carl Zeiss

One of the machines generating interest at the Carl Zeiss booth at this year's IMTS was the Surfcom 2000, which was sold to a customer at the show.

The Surfcom 2000 measures contour and surface roughness with a single sensor and instrument. Bob Wasilesky, product manager for SF&G (surface form and geometry) products, says, "With one system, you can get geometric figures in any possible configuration. Normally, you have to use two pieces. The 2000 is extremely accurate with measurement ranges of 10 mm resolution to one-millionth of an inch."

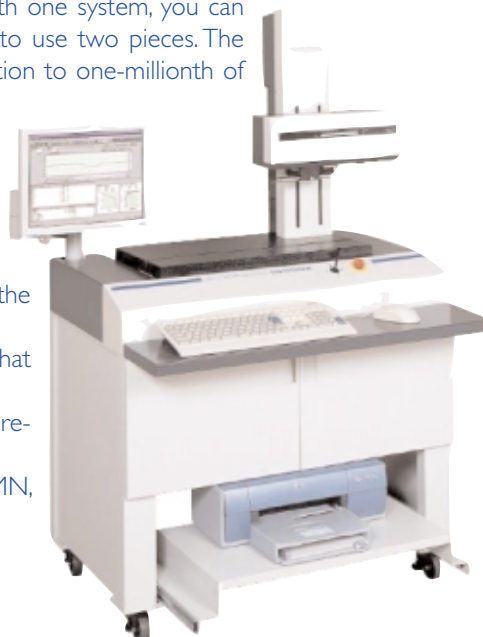
The Surfcom 1500 generated interest at the show as well, Wasilesky says. This machine takes surface roughness measurement only and can move 360° around the x- and y-axes.

This single-key operation takes fully automatic measurements with one click. Best of all, says Wasilesky, it takes 10 minutes instead of the usual 60. "The problem with taking these measurements usually involves the setting up," he says. "Our system sets itself up."

Finally, Zeiss featured the Roundcom, a roundness measuring machine that uses air-bearing systems with drives z, r and  $\theta$ .

"This is a solid, rigid machine that is capable of reading nano-measurements," Wasilesky says.

For more information, contact the Carl Zeiss IMT division, of Osseo, MN, by telephone at (763) 533-9990 or on the Internet at [www.carlzeiss.com](http://www.carlzeiss.com).

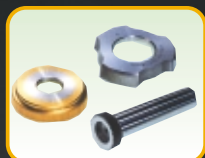


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quality gear production, such as grinding and hard finishing."

Also, several exhibitors agreed that economic prospects were good. Nowicki talked about prospects in both general and gear manufacturing. "LMT has seen an upward swing in the overall U.S. manufacturing economy and is expecting double digit sales growth to report for 2004 in all of its business segments," he said. "In the gear cutting industry, LMT is experiencing growth in excess of 30 percent."

Krumpe's indicators for a good future included the show itself and LeCount's new North American distributor, Star SU: "The rest of this year and 2005 should be good growth years."

"We expect 2004 to finish with a bang and 2005 to continue strong," Hiscock said. "IMTS supported this in terms of discussion and future programs."

Kapp also agreed, somewhat.

"Our business has been steadily increasing since the middle of the year, and the flow of customers at our booth reflected that interest," Lang said. But he expected the upswing to end. "We believe that within the next two quarters, we will see a peak in the current demand cycle."

Whatever the future may hold, though, Deneau himself was encouraged by IMTS 2004.

After the '02 show, A/W Systems wasn't sure it would exhibit at the '04 one, he said. But the company did and: "We're going to do it again in '06." ⚙

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