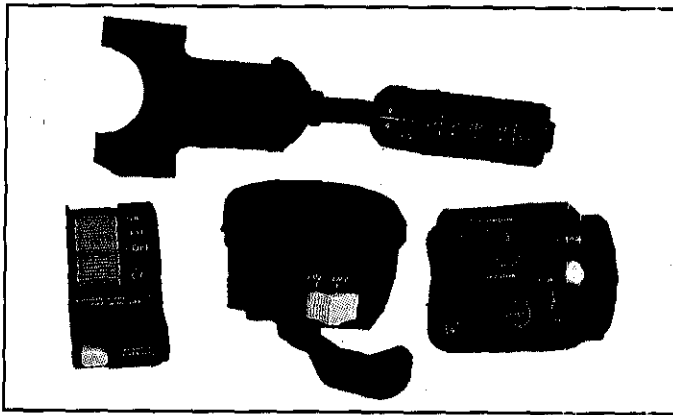


Hobbs Corporation...A Global Perspective... a Custom Approach

Hobbs Corporation headquartered in Springfield, Illinois designs, manufactures and distributes robust products to over 1,000 customers with a heavy emphasis on off-highway vehicles. Hobbs manufactures electro- and electronic-mechanical components for over 30 industries and exports to 33 countries. Product families include hour meters; controls/shifters; pressure/vacuum switches; off-highway lighting;



key switches and flashers. Major markets are sports vehicles, construction, agricultural, medical, heavy duty trucks, industrial and automotive.

A Change in Focus

Hobbs has been concentrating in recent years on developing controls for "man-to-machine" interface systems. The overall goal is to design numerous functions into one product that is rugged, functional and aesthetically pleasing. Our challenge is to provide sealed components with sliding, toggle and/or button engagement; lighted versions; molded terminal arrays; and indicator light panels.

One Size Doesn't Fit All

Custom product developments, however, go beyond controls. Hobbs has always modified existing product to meet a customer's application, i.e., specific-use pressure switches for vacuum cleaners, oxygen concentrators, transmissions and on-highway trucks. Using the basic hour meter concept, we created versions that run from the alternator and a "maintenance minder" meter for various industries. The shifter/turn signal used on construction and industrial equipment, has been modified for use on sports vehicles and heavy trucks. The lighting product family has expanded to include halogen sealed beams, composite lamps, custom designer lights, specialty lighting and indicator modules for snow mobiles, sports vehicles and lawn and garden equipment.

Speed and Accuracy

New technologies are utilized to enhance and optimize our overall capabilities from the design level to the manufactured part. At the design phase, Hobbs is using the popular solid model packages, Pro/ENGINEER and Solid-works, allowing us to create custom products with enhanced design flexibility. Rapid Prototyping (Fused Deposition Modeling) allows us to create non-functioning

prototypes in a matter of days or weeks instead of months. The customer gets a fast, economical prototype from which "form and fit" can be evaluated reducing their production timeline. At the pre-production level, mold flow analysis is used to determine proper mold design prior to building a tool ensuring a producible part by finding design flaws before production. Hobbs has also begun the transition to Scientific Molding, a systematic look at collecting data to optimize every function of the design process. Great improvements in cycle time, scrap reduction, and quality consistency have occurred with the utilization of Scientific Molding.

Becoming a "Lean Enterprise"

Custom product development has been enhanced by implementing several challenging manufacturing philosophies. Lean manufacturing was implemented in the mid-1990s. Support operations are now being addressed with the goal of establishing a true Lean Enterprise Business System. The organizational approach includes establishing quality systems and practices focused on achieving Six Sigma results. The implementation of these crucial systems allows Hobbs to react faster and more efficiently.

Technology Sharing

Other InvenSys companies provide Hobbs access to advanced technologies. The InvenSys Smart Module is an economical microcontroller initially designed for the appliance industry. Hobbs can utilize that technology in their controls and monitoring devices. Different chips are available with a wide range of programmable memory required for "smart" systems.

A new family of basic pressure sensors, designed for high volume applications, provides the low-cost subassembly sensors required in custom-packaged designs for use in our major off-highway markets.

Committed

Our customers demand design flexibility and the expertise to produce more than off-the-shelf components. Hobbs mission is to provide customers with parts that meets their exact specifications in shape, size, and function. Producing cost-effective solutions while not compromising ruggedness and reliability is a continuing commitment. Our goal is to become a customer's one-stop component market basket with special proficiency in custom product development.

The Big Picture

Hobbs is a part of the InvenSys Sensors Systems Group which was established in 1999 with the merger of BTR plc and Siebe Controls. The companies making up the Sensor Systems Group offer on-vehicle components, controls and monitoring devices, pressure, speed, position and thermal sensors through the utilization of 15 manufacturing facilities in the U.S., Mexico, the Caribbean, Europe and the Far East.

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