

# OCS

# in focus



A magazine from OCS –  
Overhead Conveyor System AB

2/2004

From the content

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**Quality** is a  
**requirement**

**Stressless** with  
6 000 carriers

**Customer priority**  
full service contract

**your need is our know-how**

# Quality – all the way

**ONCE UPON A TIME**, my older colleagues have told me, you could use the quality of your products as a sales argument. That is a time long past. Today quality is not an option; it's a requirement and a minimum for doing business. In addition, the term quality has been expanded to include such factors as delivery on time and availability of the installed equipment.

And of course quality doesn't begin or end with the products. As a matter of fact, quality has to be at the forefront of a company's entire operation. That's why we at OCS right now are putting a lot of time and effort into our quality management. This includes, but does not stop at, all the work needed for a quality audit according to ISO 9001 and ISO 14001.

It is also a fact that no matter the excellence of your products; without maintenance no equipment can be expected to work properly for very long. Because of this OCS now offer our customers the option of a full-service contract. This will bring them a number of benefits, not least the expertise of OCS technicians in the on-going maintenance work.

Another aspect of quality is being able to offer your products and services in those markets and geographical areas that your customers find most interesting. We at OCS believe that Hungary rapidly is becoming such an area and are therefore very happy to welcome Flex-Coop Kft in Jászberény as our newest sales representative.

Pleasant reading!

Kenth Almqvist  
Managing Director, CEO



## New contracts...

- Westerbergs Bad, Skene, Sweden.  
Assembly line for spa bath manufacturing  
Twin track system. Completion January 2004.
  - Lear Corporation, Detroit, USA.  
Assembly line for instrument panels to Chrysler  
Twin track system. Completion April 2004.
  - Lear Corporation, Göteborg, Sweden  
Assembly line for instrument panels to Volvo  
Twin track system – extension. Completion April 2004.
  - Green Cargo, Göteborg, Sweden  
Distribution Centre for hanging garments  
Universal system – extension. Completion June 2004.
  - Dräxlmaier, Landau, Germany  
Assembly line for interior parts to BMW  
Twin track system. Completion June 2004.
  - Stokke, Örsta, Norway  
Order picking, sewing and assembly line for furniture  
Universal and twin track system. Completion July 2004.
  - Findlay, Wackersdorf, Germany  
Order picking, kitting of parts for assembly of interior  
door panel to BMW  
Roller conveyor, flow-rack, pick-by-light and OCS Twin  
track system. Completion October 2004.
  - Ekornes, Ikornes, Norway  
Transport and automatic buffer for foam parts to  
Stressless armchairs  
Universal system. Completion October 2004.
- "Despite the slump in the markets for the manufacturing industry, we can see a good future for OCS and our systems," comments Christer Lundgren, sales manager. "This proves that our products have a reasonable price and a flexibility that helps our customers to keep their investments on a lower level in hard times."

To be continued in the next issue of OCS in Focus...

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# German sales office open

OCS products are sold in a number of countries, and in Germany OCS has a sales office of their own. An initiative that seems to be paying off in increased sales figures.

The German sales office is located in Löhne in central Germany, 80 km west of

Hannover, and the staff so far consists of Jürgen Imort and a secretary.

“We found that it probably would be a good idea to start an OCS office in Germany. This way it’s easier for the customers as they get a German contact when they call the OCS Verkaufsbüro.”

The strategy has been to make OCS better known by, for example, participating

in German exhibitions and trade fairs.

“Today customers with a transport need often only look at traditional roller or belt conveyors.

**We need to make** them look at overhead systems as well. Then of course we also have to convince them of the advantages of the OCS systems, and offer

## Assembly line for BMW engine cooling system

The automotive industry is of course a very interesting market for OCS. The German company Modine Wackersdorf GmbH is a supplier to BMW and OCS has delivered a comprehensive conveyor system to their new factory.

Modine has invested in a new factory for the production of engine cooling systems for several BMW models. The factory is located to Wackersdorf in Germany.

“One of the main reasons why OCS was accepted as a supplier was that we could present a reference installation at the Dräxlmaier Group, which is another supplier to BMW and other German car manufacturers,” comments Jürgen Imort at



OCS German sales office. “Another was our drive system, which is quiet, clean and safe.”

The conveyor system at Modine is based on the OCS twin track system and

consists of some 300 metres driven line as well as 25 buffer areas and workstations. This includes two picking areas, which supply nine workstations where the engine cooling systems are assembled.

**Processing starts** in one of the picking areas, where an operator picks all the components needed for an engine cooling system and places them on a product carrier. The carrier can either move along the conveyor automatically or be pushed manually by the operator. The picking area uses a ‘pick-by-light’ system, which means that a lamp by each storage position shows the operator what parts to pick. A display by the lamp also indicates the number of a particular part to be picked.

When the product carrier contains all the components needed, the conveyor system transports it towards the assembly area where it is halted in a power & free buffer area until there is a free spot at a workstation. Each workstation has room for one carrier in a buffer position, one in the work position, and one in a return position.

At the work station the operator picks the components from the product carrier

and assembles the engine cooling systems on a palette in a jig. When the engine cooling systems is finished the palette is transported on a roller



conveyor to another area for testing and storage, before being transported in sequence to the BMW assembly line.

“The installation at Modine has very strict demands for availability,” says Jürgen Imort. “The entire conveyor system must for example function even if electrical power fails or a drive motor breaks. In that case the product carriers will be moved manually between the different areas.”

“The product carriers also have the newly developed release handle with the safety feature which instantly disconnects the carrier from the drive tube if something blocks its way. This was a demand from the customer to improve the safety for the operators in the factory,” ends Jürgen Imort.



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# opens possibilities

them a reasonable price.”

Jürgen Imort explains that an important part of selling conveyor systems in Germany is to have good reference installations that the interested customers can visit.

**“Now we have several** of such reference installations, both in companies

that are sub suppliers to the German automotive industry and in other companies with a good reputation, which is very positive for us.”

So far the work of the German sales office is paying off, as sales in Germany has improved over the last two years, and Jürgen Imort is optimistic about the future: “The future looks good for us. With

new reference installations and our unique products I am sure that OCS will continue to grow in

Germany, even if the competition with the German companies is very hard.”



## Reliability opens the door for OCS

The OCS twin track system is silent, clean, reliable and safe. That was one of the deciding factors when one of Germany’s leading manufacturers of garage and industrial doors choose OCS as the supplier of the conveyor system in their new factory.

Hörmann manufactures doors of various sizes, from ordinary garage doors to large industrial doors. When the company decided to build a new production line for operators used for industrial doors, OCS was asked to supply a conveyor system for the picking and assembly of motors, gearboxes, and control boxes for these operators.

The production system at the new factory in Steinhagen, Germany is based on 50 twin track product carriers of two types, one for the motor/gearbox and one for the control box. The product carriers use 190 metres of driven line as well as 26 power & free buffer positions. In addition there are 7 workstations and 2 test stations.

### Guided by incoming orders

from customers the control system releases either a product carrier for a motor/gearbox or a carrier for a control

box to the operator.

The carrier is then moved through the picking area where the operator picks the components needed for either product.

The operator is guided by a ‘pick-by-light’-system which uses lamps and displays to show which and how many of the components to pick.

**The product carrier** can be turned 90 degrees to each side to facilitate the picking, which is done while the operator pushes the carrier manually. When the picking has been completed the carrier is automatically transported to one of two buffer areas, depending on the product it carries.

From this area it is forwarded to a product specialized workstation, where an operator builds the motor/gearbox or the control box in the product carrier. When



the assembly is finished, the carrier continues to a test station where for example power lines are automatically attached to the electrical motors before testing begins. If the products pass the tests, they are finally transported to an unloading area and the empty carriers returned to the buffer area.

“Hörmann Antrieb is an old customer and had their first OCS system installed some five years ago,” says Jürgen Imort from OCS German sales office, “and this of course worked in our favour.”

“They were also impressed by the reliability, low noise level and cleanliness of our system, as well as our ability to stabilize the product carrier in the workstation, in order to give the operator a good, ergonomic workplace.”

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# Stressless with 6 000 carriers

6 000 product carriers and more than two kilometres of conveyor line in a single system! And that's only in the first stage. An armchair factory on the Norwegian west coast is one of OCS' most complex deliveries in several years.

Ekornes is a well known furniture manufacturer in Norway and the Stressless



armchair is one of their most successful products. In the seat and the back of each armchair there are cushions made from heavy plastic foam. Each cushion can weigh as much as eight kilograms.

The cushions are moulded and processed in a factory in the town of Ikornes, Norway with the help of a universal system from OCS and an advanced computer system, a so called Flexible Manufacturing System (FMS).

**The cushions** are formed in a moulding carousel and loaded directly on the product carriers, which automatically transport them to a storage space for hardening. This space can hold as many as 6 000 loaded carriers and when they are stored the foam cushions are also sorted by article number and storage line.

At any given time there can be as many as 30 different articles stored, distributed on 100 ten-meter long lines.

After 48 hours of hardening, the foam cushions are automatically brought out

from the storage space and sent to one of five trimming stations where an operator trims off excess material while turning the carrier and the cushion 90 degrees.

Next the carriers bring the cushion to one of two glue stations where a robot automatically sprays glue on parts of the cushion and an operator manually fastens extra foam material and wadding. Finally the glued cushions are brought to a buffer where they are manually removed from the product carriers and transported to the next step in the armchair production.

**"It is a very** complex system," comments Christer Lundgren, sales manager at OCS, "but it has improved both the efficiency and the working environment of the factory. Before the cushions were transported by roller conveyors which meant a lot of manual handling for trimming and gluing. Today the cushions stay on the carriers and the operators can process them without having to lift them."

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# Become a VIP-customer

by signing a full service contract agreement

One of the main characteristics of the OCS products is simple maintenance and long service intervals. Maintenance is normally handled by the customer's own staff, but more and more customers have shown interest in having OCS taking care of this work.

Because of this OCS now offers its customers an optional full service contract. This includes among other things a plan for preventive maintenance and spare parts recommendations.

“A full service contract will also give the customer priority service in emergencies, lower rates for service work, and the comfort of knowing that our very competent service staff takes care of all or parts of the maintenance work,” comments Kenth Almqvist, CEO of OCS.

“Planned preventive maintenance is of course of major importance in order to avoid production problems.”



## Safer operation

**OCS has developed** a new function for their product carriers, which both improves the availability and the safety of the conveyor system.

The feature is based on the unique power & free function of the twin track system, which makes it possible to halt or accumulate the product carriers or move them manually on driven lines. This function is now connected to a release handle which enables the operator to choose whether the carrier should be moved automatically or manually. This is useful if, for example, electrical power fails.

In addition, the release handle has been designed as a safety feature. This means that if the carrier is in automatic drive and hits someone standing in its way, the carrier is automatically released from the drive tube and stopped. When the person moves, the carrier automatically starts moving again.

This function makes it possible to allow people to move in areas with automatic transport systems, without having to screen them off with fences or other safety equipment.



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