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Demand remains constant in today's global economy for industrial plants to increase asset efficiency, reliability and productivity.

Operations seek viable product and service solutions that will effectively equip them for the challenges and deliver positive impact. From our perspective, a significant part of the process involves listening to customers, learning from them, applying our expertise and then responding with solutions that can make the difference.

Now, a new and unprecedented SKF venue in North America has been established to bring our many resources still closer to customers and to promote the type of dynamic interaction that is at the heart of strong and thriving customer partnerships.

The first SKF Solution Factory in the U.S. opened last month in Houston, TX. Its central mission is to provide a wide range of integrated, value-added solutions "under one roof." This facility joins eight others around the globe—*with more planned as a unique network to serve customers with an ever-growing portfolio of products and services.*
The potential for our customers and the furthering of our valued relationships is virtually limitless. Competencies at this Solution Factory include:

- Applications engineering
- Spindle and ball-screw repair
- Sealing solutions
- Lubrication-system expertise
- Remote condition monitoring and diagnostics
- Engineering consultancy services
- Operator and worker training
- Mechanical-equipment services (including mounting, alignment and balancing)

Offering all of these resources at one strategic location enables us to advance our commitment to deliver customized and timely service packages tailored for particular operations.

Of course, our Solution Factories stand as just one of many avenues available to our customers across industries—*including more than 10,000 SKF industrial distributor locations worldwide.* They also represent a highly significant destination underscoring our pivotal role as a technological leader and knowledge engineering company for more than 100 years.

In many ways, the Solution Factory extends and expands that all-important dialogue with customers. We have been successful in acquiring knowledge by working closely with leading customers; understanding their industries to develop new products and solutions; and contributing value by improving performance and increasing production efficiency. The process has allowed us to address the entire lifecycle of a particular asset from the design phase to services and service-related products. This all-encompassing focus, in turn, sharpens our customer focus and our offerings.

In the foreseeable marketplace, implementing optimized maintenance strategies and cost-effective solutions will continue to be crucial. For example, in a thriving economy, failed machinery is typically replaced outright, usually with considerable expense and downtime. Those days, for the most part, are gone, since, in the current economic climate, every day and every dollar counts. As a result, increasing attention is being put on equipment upgrades, refurbishment and post-maintenance testing to mitigate otherwise high capital costs.

It's along these lines that the SKF Solution Factory offers yet another path toward realizing overall asset efficiency and, just as importantly, supports a highly advantageous business practice—getting even closer to our customers.

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