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For virtually any industrial organization, regardless of product, these are undeniably difficult times. Challenges associated with escalating energy costs, equipment reliability issues and an ongoing demand for improved productivity and profitability abound. But, for those organizations guided by a clear strategic vision and a can-do attitude, every challenge presents opportunity for new thinking and fresh solutions.

Within our company, our defined vision is "to equip the world with SKF knowledge" by listening to customers, evaluating their challenges, applying our multi-industry experience and applications expertise and introducing technologies and services that will offer measurable and positive impact. Our dialogue with customers has underscored the fact that energy consumption ranks high among their concerns. As a knowledge engineering company, one of our missions is to respond with resources and solutions that will ease the burden. We have.

In fact, based on our extensive knowledge about bearings, seals, lubrication, mechatronics and reliability solutions, a new client needs analysis tool has been developed to help customers identify and implement energy- and cost-saving measures plant-wide. Targeting high-energy areas at an operation, it is designed to pave the way for energy savings. The assessment expands to examine chemical treatments, lubricant use and lubrication systems, as well as other operating processes that potentially can be improved— *which, in turn, can reduce environmental impact at a facility and accrue even more savings*. Once applied, the client needs analysis can make a big difference, as illustrated by the following success stories that came about as a result of three of these analyses.

In the first success story, a spot-welding application at an automotive plant, the traditional pneumatic-steered actuation equipment (which consumed considerable energy) was replaced with a compact electromechanical actuator. This technology shift resulted in energy savings of more than 90% (using 13.5 million kWh less energy annually).

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In the second success story, the onsite generation capacity at an oil refinery was running in a reduced state due to operational problems that prevented the achieving of full capacity. The customer was forced to purchase 12 MW of power from an outside supplier to cover the shortfall. By employing a combination of advanced vibration analysis and machine diagnostics, SKF specialists were able to increase the generation capacity by those missing megawatts, without changing the refinery's existing equipment.

In the third success story, a large paper mill had experienced more than 100 hours of unplanned downtime in one year. Not surprisingly, this level of downtime hampered production and raised uncertainty about the reliability of mill deliveries. A team of SKF reliability engineers, lubrication specialists and maintenance technicians conducted a detailed mill-wide assessment and identified opportunities to optimize asset efficiency, reduce the unplanned downtime and maintenance costs and increase overall productivity. An integrated maintenance program was introduced encompassing the supply and inventory management of bearings, seals and lubricants and the supply and installation of multiple condition monitoring systems. Unscheduled downtime virtually disappeared.

The overriding lesson here is that in today's industrial environment customers anticipate— *and deserve*

—suppliers who can successfully add value by transferring knowledge from one application or industry to another. They seek true partners who are able to bring more to the table based on experience from many perspectives. They expect that implemented solutions will translate to measurable benefits. Ultimately, they recognize that in knowledge, there is power.

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