

Industry Outlook: We're Staying The Course

Written by Randy Colip, Executive Vice President/Sales, Baldor Electric Company
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A year ago, most manufacturers were working overtime to get as much product produced and to the marketplace as possible. Distributors were just as busy making sure that they had the MRO products necessary to keep all those production lines up and running at full efficiency. Now, one year later, both OEMs and distributors are struggling to keep people working and their production lines running. At Baldor we are working very closely with all of our customers to help them through this very tough time.

Bucking the trend

When the economy turns sour, the first thing most distributors and OEMs do is reduce their inventory of both finished goods and MRO materials. Recognizing this, and in an effort to aid our customers, Baldor has actually increased our finished inventory to make sure that those customers have the motors, drives, gearboxes, bearings and generators they need. Our products are stocked in over 38 locations around the U.S. and Canada and in various locations around the world. We can ship from any of these locations by utilizing our state-of-the-art computer system—*the same system that lets customers see our inventory with real-time response*. This allows Baldor's OEM and distributor customers to say "yes, we have that product and can ship it today," when their customers call (while they are still on the phone). The order can then be placed directly with Baldor, for immediate shipment to any location worldwide.

In an effort to aid our customers, Baldor has actually increased our finished inventory. In addition to inventory reductions, many companies reduce their support structure during rough economic times. This can cause delays in getting the proper information to end-users when they need it. By placing more information on our internal and external Websites, as well as our own internal operating system, Baldor makes sure that this information is available for our customers—*quickly and accurately*.

We also have made sure we maintain a high level of customer service support. Our philosophy

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has always been to provide this support and assistance on a local basis—and *it's a strategy that continues today*

Our District Offices are fully staffed to ensure that our OEM and distributor customers are taken care of in a timely manner.

At Baldor, we take advantage of slow times by focusing on education and training—including *holding educational seminars to help our customers and end-users understand the EISA energy legislation that becomes law in 2010, and how they can use it for current and future growth*. In educating these groups to properly use and apply energy-efficient motors, drives and gearing, we provide them with the needed information to find new opportunities and provide for long-term growth of their businesses. While many people think that there is nothing they can do to control their energy bill, we educate people on how they can not only control, but reduce their energy consumption by installing the right types of motors, drives, gearing and even generators.

Staying close to our customers

Providing all of these advantages to our customers improves the value that we bring to the marketplace and opens up growth opportunities for those customers—and *us*. At Baldor, we feel that staying close to our customers and understanding what they really need in order to stay competitive will make all parties successful, in good times or bad.

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