

# Index Celebrates 100 Years in Business

Together with its subsidiary company, Traub, Index Group is one of the world's leading manufacturers of CNC turning machines.

## Tradition of Progress

Index was founded in 1914 by Hermann Hahn who began producing turret turning machines that same year.

"Hahn's vision was to make a very high-precision screw machine, which he did with single-spindle screw machines," says Jeffrey Reinert, president and CEO of Index Corporation, USA in Noblesville, Ind. "By 1954, a volume of about 20,000 machines had been produced. The machines were very productive, very accurate and very dependable."

In the 1950s, Index had established a worldwide reputation for producing excellent machines. Index invented and introduced the industry's first CNC multi-spindle turning machines in 1985 and had been marketing NC turning machines since 1970.

Index Corporation opened its facility in Noblesville in 2002 and since has also offered multifunctional production centers in which different process technologies can be integrated into one machine.

## Single Source

The company is ISO 9001 certified, and the 65,000-square-foot Noblesville facility is centrally located to serve customers and staff across the United States. Index also has a worldwide presence with manufacturing facilities and subsidiaries located in Germany, France, Sweden, Brazil, China and the Slovak Republic, as well as in the United States.

Index serves a wide range of industries, including automotive, machine tools, electronics, aerospace and defense, fittings, fluids, hydraulics, electronics, medical and optics.

The company strives to provide the best production solution for each customer and offers the largest program for complete machining of turned parts for both serial and single-item production.

"We pride ourselves on being state-of-the-art and the absolute top of technology in the field," says Mr. Reinert. "We try to make everything complete in one operation, eliminating the need for secondary handling which keeps production costs as low as possible, lowers scrap rates and



Photo courtesy of Index Corporation

errors. In essence, if you don't have to handle a part two, three or four times, you save that additional work to set up and rehandle the part, making it the most efficient way."

## 100 Year Celebration

To celebrate a century in business, Index Corporation hosted an open house, inviting key customers, distributors and students from the technical program at Vincennes University and other area technical schools.

The five-day open house took place in April beginning at the tail end of the PMPA National Technical Conference in order to give PMPA members the opportunity to visit the facility.

Index also held a distributor training session to provide its distribution partners with the opportunity to learn about its products while at the facility. During the open house and training, distributors, salespeople and key customers met. Key customers explained to distribution partners and salespeople why Index makes sense, including the efficiency benefits and cost savings that they experience.

"Our customers were also able to see our machines set up and running. A lot of people haven't seen a single-operation process, or don't understand the value in

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Photo courtesy of Index Corporation

it,” says Mr. Reinert. “It’s always best if we can have them here so they can see and understand it for themselves.”

Aside from the training and display of Index’s facility and processes, the open house also included food and music.

“Because of our German roots, we had good German food catered with German beverages and music as well,” says Mr. Reinert. “We had a very good turnout with a lot of key customers in attendance, as well as the mayor of Noblesville and his staff.”

Along with marking 100 years in business for Index, 2014 also marks Traub’s 75th anniversary.

### Addressing the Skills Gap

Mr. Reinert, who attended Vincennes University, witnessed the decline in apprenticeship programs throughout his career and recognized the difficulty in finding skilled, qualified and competent people in the industry. He decided to take action and approached Vincennes University about its machining programs.

“The school is well-equipped with three- to five-axis turning and milling machines, but I wanted to show them the sophistication of the Index and Traub machines,” says Mr. Reinert. “We were able to show them our clean, high-tech facility where everything is computer driven and our eight- to nine-axis machines.”

Vincennes has a double-degree program that allows students to take an additional 15-week summer program to earn a second associate’s degree in advanced manufacturing. Through the program, the top four to six students in the class travel to Index for a visit and instruction on advanced CNC programming.

The students over a three-week period during the summer learn how to create programs and run simulations on the CAD/CAM system to identify and correct any bugs, prior to actually running the programs on the machines. Index instructs these students on double-spindle machines, Swiss machines made by Traub and multi-spindle machines with between 36 and 60 axes.

After the students have completed the training at Index, they return to their class and present what they learned to their classmates.

“Not only does this cooperative program help train the next generation in our industry, it shows them what is available in precision machining careers,” says Mr. Reinert. “We also have some graduates from the program currently working for Index.”

### Looking to the Future with PMPA

According to Mr. Reinert, programs such as the combined effort with Vincennes are repeatable and Index plans to extend the program to other area technical schools.

“I think that with training and education in place, we can strengthen manufacturing,” says Mr. Reinert. “PMPA furthers the cause of growing and strengthening manufacturing. It is a critical organization to the success of this industry.”

Index Corporation continues to be an active PMPA member, attending national conferences and meetings. Mr. Reinert values the high level of involvement of the members as well as the focus on education and training.

“Our industry has a positive outlook over the next 20 to 30 years,” says Mr. Reinert. “We’re improving at doing more with what we already have in place and continue to improve the cost-effectiveness of manufacturing here in the U.S. We need new talent to enter the industry and right now we’re in the infancy of a manufacturing renaissance.”

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