



Celebrating 90 years of innovation

Founded in 1923, Ramsey Products Corp celebrates 90 years of innovation this year. The originator of Ramsey silent chains, the company designs and produces a wide range of industrial silent chain products.

In the early 1900s, industrial technology around the world was developing rapidly. Engineers were hard at work, deploying the latest technological innovations to improve a wide array of products. Such was the case with Joseph H Ramsey, a young mechanical engineering graduate from Cornell University.

Ramsey had a disagreement with other engineers of his day. They praised the current state of silent chain technology and thought that it could not be improved upon. Ramsey thought there was room for improvement. To prove his point, he proceeded to design and build a special machine that would allow him to test silent chains. He then spent the next year and a half testing every silent chain available.

Armed with the results of this extensive research and testing, Joseph Ramsey then developed what he thought was the ideal chain; one that stood up to his 'wear-out' machine better than any other design. He then obtained patents on his design and proceeded to start a company to produce these chains.

In July 1923, Ramsey Silent chain Co was incorporated. Ninety years later, the spirit of innovation that inspired Ramsey's beginning is still the foundation of today's Ramsey Products. Throughout its history, Ramsey has worked in partnership with customers to develop better products and to improve manufacturing processes. With an ongoing focus on product quality, customer support and employee satisfaction, the company has grown to become a worldwide supplier of silent chains for both conveying and power transmission applications.

GROWING REPUTATION

Today, Ramsey supplies silent chain to customers in more than 70 countries around the world. As this number continues to grow, the company has established representatives and warehouses in North America, Asia, Europe and Africa to meet growing customer demand. Because customers frequently expect fast delivery of standard chains, thousands of feet of chain are stocked to meet these evolving expectations.

Ramsey believes that research and development is critical to providing customers with the products they need to move their companies forward. This belief, which is embedded in the organisation's history and its culture, has led to many product developments and numerous patents. Within the past five years, Ramsey has invested strongly in additional laboratory equipment and chain testing machinery. "Ramsey's ongoing focus on R&D enables us to stay one step ahead in the ever changing glass industry" suggests Gerrit Hageman, Engineering Sales Manager for Ramsey Europe.



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A fundamental value in Ramsey's corporate culture is the conviction that customers and employees deserve to be treated honestly, fairly and with respect. "Our business is about far more than products, it is about the relationships we build and maintain" comments Ramsey Products President, William Hall. "We are here to provide our customers with solutions and help them solve their problems. We believe that getting to know our customers closely, visiting their plants and seeing in person the challenges they face is vital to everyone's long-term success."

Adding to this sentiment, David Holcomb, Vice President of Sales for Ramsey, states: " We want our customers to be on a first name basis not only with Ramsey's sales team but our Engineering Department, Customer Service Department and our representatives worldwide. If the customer has a concern or is just looking for ideas to help increase their production, we want to be their best source for support."

Ramsey's commitment to personal relationships is also evident

among its workforce, where the average length of service is over 14 years. One employee is currently celebrating 45 years with the company and 36 people have more than 10 years' service each. Not long ago, another colleague retired after 60 years of service. This level of experience and continuity helps provide an impressive degree of service and expertise.

Over the years, Ramsey has developed the following motto, which summarises the company's >



Ramsey's latest addition to its wear protected chains, Lifeguard Extended Pitch silent chain.



commitment: "If a job can be done with silent chain, Ramsey will help find the most affordable and effective chain for the job." Each day, customer service personnel, sales agents and representatives go to work with this idea in mind. Their focus is on working closely with customers to find the best possible solution for their specific needs.

MEETING QUALITY EXPECTATIONS

Today's glass producers expect better technology and superior quality. Fifty years ago when Ramsey started supplying chain to glass manufacturers, the speed of production was slow; and wire mesh was used for transport. Precision was not a requirement. Today, with the latest technology and equipment, production is moving faster and faster and precision is key. Manufacturers are looking for chains that can handle increased horsepower capacities and higher speeds. More and more companies are looking for every possible method to improve their systems.

Manufacturers expect a durable, flat and exceptionally smooth conveying surface for rapid, synchronised transport of fragile products. According to the company, Ramsey's silent conveying chains provide just such a conveyor, which is also non-slip and heat-resistant and can be customised to fit a wide range of industrial applications. All Ramsey conveying chains are designed to engage sprockets smoothly and efficiently, providing minimal speed variation in the conveying surface.

Many customers find the products they need within Ramsey's extensive lines of single pin and two pin standard conveying chains. Others prefer chains that are custom-built to their specifications, or perhaps one of Ramsey's wear protected chains. The company's latest developments for the glass industry are wear protected chains, including Lifeguard (patent pending) and Allguard FX, both of which can greatly improve conveyor life and have been well received by customers worldwide. Early indications are that these products will continue to be adopted by glass producers seeking to upgrade their conveyor performance and maximise productivity.

MARKET SOLUTIONS

Over the past 90 years, the silent chain industry has experienced many peaks and troughs. In more recent times, the industry has been relatively flat due to economic conditions worldwide. Although the growth of silent chain has been limited, Ramsey is seeing different



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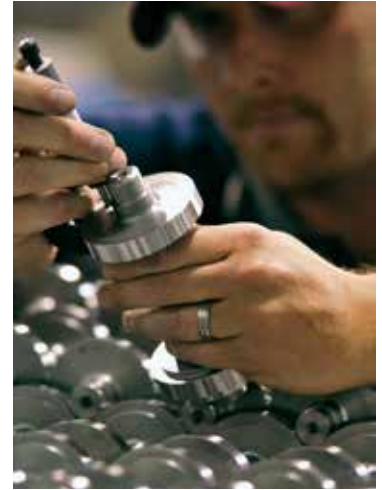
applications present themselves where alternative products simply do not hold up due to extreme heat, high speeds and heavy loads. The company believes silent chain will be around for many years to come and expects the industries served to grow as customers worldwide consistently look for better solutions to solve their problems.

GLASS INDUSTRY CHALLENGES

With regard to glass conveying chains, the biggest challenges are consistently producing top quality chains, while controlling production costs and developing innovative products. Customers everywhere are under considerable pressure to hold down costs and improve productivity. According to Ramsey, they are looking to their chain supplier to work with them to help achieve these goals.

To meet these challenges, Ramsey maintains full control over every aspect of chain production, including chain design, tooling production, component production, heat treatment, chain assembly and inspection. The company also maintains long-term contracts with key materials suppliers to minimise undesirable variations in material costs. And product development is driven by Ramsey-trained engineers in the company's dedicated chain production facility.

Ramsey personnel frequently meet with glass producers to understand better the requirements of each customer. Discussions often focus on such topics as the customer's specific production expectations, equipment needs, problems encountered, chain design developments and overall purchasing planning. Working together



To ensure top quality products, Ramsey maintains full control over every aspect of chain production, from chain design to final inspection.

on such issues enables Ramsey to help customers meet their specific needs and goals.

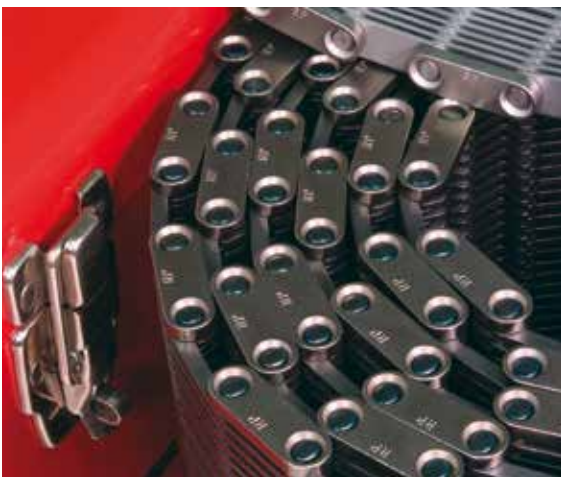
TECHNOLOGY FOCUS

"There's always something new at Ramsey... our future will go wherever our customers take us" says William Hall. "We are always open to ideas from our customers." In the quest for longer lasting chains, Ramsey is currently pursuing alternative chain materials.

Materials that offer promise for better conveyor life are tested thoroughly. Those that have been found to be economically viable and have the desired strength and wear characteristics are then used to produce prototype chains, which are deployed to test facilities. In addition to material research, Ramsey is also exploring innovative ways to optimise chain life through special chain assemblies.

"Companies are cutting back" comments David Foden, European Sales Manager. "They are relying more and more on us to help them. Our staff knows that responding to this need with a high level of support and solid solutions will pay off." In addition, Ramsey has an advanced website for silent chain drive assistance. The provision of good technical support and an abundance of knowledge is helping customers to rely on Ramsey for their silent chain drive system needs. ■

FURTHER INFORMATION:
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Allguard FX extended pitch chain, one of Ramsey's wear protected chains, resists common forms of conveyor chain wear and can greatly extend chain life.