The Crosby S-423T Super TERMINATOR™ is the first wedge socket designed to take advantage of the performance properties associated with high performance, high strength, compacted strand, rotation resistant wire rope.

The Super TERMINATOR™ offers several advantages over traditional methods of wedge socket terminations:

- The innovative design will significantly increase the termination efficiency over existing wedge sockets available today.
- Terminations on most ropes have a minimum efficiency rating of 80% of the rope’s catalog breaking strength.
- Patent pending design eliminates the difficulty of installing high performance, high strength, compacted strand, rotation resistant wire rope into a wedge socket termination.
- Proper application of the Super TERMINATOR™ eliminates the “first load” requirement of conventional wedge socket terminations.

Additional features:

- Wire rope sizes available:
  5/8” - 1 1/4”, 14 mm - 32 mm
- Available as a complete assembly, or as a wedge kit that can be retrofitted onto existing Crosby S-421T TERMINATOR™ wedge sockets.
- Wedge accessories provided with a zinc finish.
- Meets or exceeds all ASME B30.26 requirements including: identification, ductility, design factor, proof load, and temperature requirements. Importantly, they meet other critical performance criteria not addressed by ASME B30.26 including: fatigue life, impact properties and material traceability.
- Available with bolt, nut and cotter (S-423TB)

The Super TERMINATOR™ by Crosby. The first wedge socket termination designed specifically for high performance wire rope.
Barbara Gilbert
Editor
barbaraawrf@att.net
800-444-2973 • 248-994-7753

A.W.R.F.
CALENDAR

2011

September 20-21  ASME B.30
Minneapolis, MN

October 2-5  A.W.R.F. General Meeting and P.I.E.
Hyatt Regency Crown Center
Kansas City, MO

2012

January 25-26  AWRF Technical Meeting,
Scottsdale AZ

January 27-28  AWRF Board of Directors Meeting,
Scottsdale, AZ

April 22-25  General Meeting
Grand Hyatt Buckhead, Atlanta, GA

September 30  General Meeting, Marriott
Thru October 3  Wardman Park, Washington DC

2013

April 28 - May 1  General Meeting & P.I.E.
Omni Fort Worth, Fort Worth, TX

October 20-23  General Meeting
Century Plaza Hyatt Regency,
Los Angeles, CA

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AWRF
Fall 2011
General Meeting
and P. I. E.

Kansas City, MO
Oct 2 - 5, 2011
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Over the course of history, tension members of wire rope, chain and various cordage products have been continually improved through material engineering and design to achieve higher strength. Today we have extra improved plow steel wire rope, grade 120 chain and cordage products made from high tenacity synthetic materials. Now Slingmax® Rigging Solutions has patented a method to increase the strength of roundslings by 15% or more using the same amount and type of material.

The process for manufacturing natural, synthetic and wire ropes has been known for hundreds of years and essentially consists of taking parallel yarns or wires and helically winding them into larger strands, then helically winding the strands together into finished ropes. By making helically wound strands from smaller yarns or wires, the efficiency of the finished product is enhanced and tension is equalized resulting in a much higher breaking strength.

Since the invention of the roundsling, engineers have tried to invent a method to helically form the core bundle inside the protective covers or tubes. Every process that was tried used some form of machinery attached or in conjunction with the roundsling machine itself. Typically, cones of core yarn were arranged on a turn table that rotated to form a larger strand as it was wound inside the cover on a roundsling machine. There were two significant problems with this method to form a helically wound core. The first was the rotation of the turntable had to be synchronized with the speed of the roundsling machine. The second problem; it only worked when there were several cones of core yarn utilized, meaning it only performed well when making higher capacity roundslings. For smaller capacity roundslings that used only one or two cones of core yarn, it was not effective.

Initially, the Twin-Path® sling was made using standard tubes or covers and all of the strands inserted via the Slingmax® roundsling machine were basically run parallel and at random inside the tube. This was and is true of all other known roundslings manufactured today. Roundslings made with parallel or random length strands do not develop the efficiency or breaking strength per pound of core fiber as roundslings made with our Slingmax® patented rifled tube. It is also true that roundslings made with parallel strands will not last as long in cycling tests.

The rifled cover from Slingmax® Rigging Solutions conforms to US Patent #7,926,859 and works like the inside of a rifle barrel where the bullet spins as it leaves the muzzle of the gun. This spinning or helical winding of the core yarn significantly improves the breaking strength of the Twin-Path® roundsling and fortifies the slings fatigue resistance, adding to the slings longevity. A significant feature of the patented Slingmax® roundsling machine is the non-rotating tail stock which also improves the helical winding process of the core and rifled cover. All three features, the K-Spec® core yarn, rifled cover and Slingmax® roundsling machine work together to make the strongest and lightest roundsling available today.

We first tested this new technology by making identical roundslings side by side. The only difference was the cover. One sling was made using a Covermax® rifled cover and the other with a standard cover. Both were quality products but only the Covermax® conformed to our new patent. The resultant breaking strength of the two slings differed by 17%, a significant disparity. The rifled Covermax® sling broke at 139,000 lbs while the standard cover sling failed at 118,000 lbs. The helically wound core strands added an extra 21,000 lbs of strength vs. the exact same number of core strands run parallel or random length. It should be noted that a chief engineer of a textile company was witness to the entire fabrication and testing process described above. He commented: “If I had not seen it with my own eyes I would not have believed it.”
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VISIT US AT
Gold Lot Booth G-407
Today's tour will begin with a drive through Downtown Kansas City where guests will view old historic buildings, the new and exiting skyscrapers as well as the Sprint Center, the Kansas City Power and Light District and the new Kauffman Performing Art Center.

The first stop will be at the unique and amazing Arabia Steamboat Museum. A “one of a kind” museum, the Arabia will excite guests beginning with the tales of its recovery and continuing with the unusual exhibits. The Arabia sank just north of Kansas City in 1856 and rested under 40 feet of sand, silt and mud until excavated in 1988. Over 200 tons of the original cargo was recovered and after thousands of hours of restoration and preservation, many of these items are on display in the Museum. This collection of pre-Civil War artifacts is the largest in the country and features china, perfume, jewelry, leather goods, hardware, textiles, preserved food products and rare Indian bead collection. A 15-minute video presentation tells the story of the “Great White Arabia” from her last voyage on the Missouri River to the wonderful displays of her treasures in the Museum.

Guests will now have an opportunity to enjoy a taste of the artsy Crossroad District including the delightful Christopher Elbow Chocolates where exquisite and tasteful chocolates are created, the contemporary Hilliard Art Gallery and the Tomboy Design Shop where upscale ladies’ upscale fashions are brought to life. All of these businesses are small and intimate operations.

One of today’s highlights will be the visit to the Webster House where guests will enjoy lunch including a salad, entrée, dessert and beverage. Following lunch, time has been allowed for guests to browse the upscale shop that features imported English antiques, elegant gifts, linens and much more.

No tour would be complete without a drive through the world-renowned Country Club Plaza. The 14 square block outdoor shopping center opened its first shop in 1922 and today it features over 170 upscale shops and boutiques, restaurants, theatres, etc. Its Moorish architecture and lovely fountains and imported statuary enhance the area creating an outdoor art gallery. The city’s most beautiful fountain, J.C. Nichols Fountain is located on the Plaza.
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Shared Knowledge

BRIDON believes it is important that our users are knowledgeable about the properties, installation, use, inspection and maintenance of our products. This belief has led BRIDON to offer both formal product-training seminars supported by relevant product safety and product data literature as well as specialist courses tailored to suit customer requirements.

Customer Service

The ‘Difference’ at BRIDON is service, which is second to none. Such excellence is achieved not only by having the product available when you want it, but by also providing a knowledgeable team of field sales representatives, a fully trained and capable Customer Services team dealing specifically with enquiries and orders supported by expert rope engineers. BRIDON products are available across the USA, Canada and around the world via a network of Distributors. For more information about any of these value added features, please contact your local BRIDON Distributor or BRIDON American Corporation direct.

The Difference is BRIDON

A Commitment to Quality

The ‘Difference’ is that Bridon’s products are tested to destruction. This ‘Powercheck’ enables us to satisfy ourselves that the minimum breaking strength has indeed been achieved or exceeded. Not all manufacturers carry out this test. Failure to meet the required minimum breaking force may mean that the design factor of safety for the equipment or machinery has been compromised.

Setting the Standard

BRIDON strives to ‘set the standard’ on both its domestic market and overseas. The achievement of such goals becomes apparent when many OEMs specify and recommend BRIDON products, because The Difference is BRIDON.

Engineering Excellence

The majority of Bridon’s products are manufactured with wires produced by BRIDON, using state of the art machinery. These wires are subsequently spun into strands and then bonded into ropes specially designed to meet the strength and performance requirements demanded by you, our valued customer.

Endurance and Reliability

BRIDON products are time tested and better able to withstand severe field applications as a result of the superior fatigue, crush resistance and rotational characteristics associated with all products within our high performance range.

www.bridonamerican.com
QHSE Update; 2nd quarter 2011

The QHSE has updated the Safety CD that came out in 2008. It was distributed to the membership in August/September 2011. The updates incorporate safety regulation revisions that have been made since 2008. The safety CD can be used as a reference/educational tool to help companies create and maintain safety programs of their own.

The QHSE committee has gathered safety data from the 2010 survey responses. The data showed that the most common types of injuries among our membership are hand, back and eye. The safety survey continues to be our greatest resource in determining what kind of safety information is important to our membership. If you have not filled out your safety survey please consider doing so, the QHSE depends on membership participation to continually improve the safety programs currently offered; Safety CDs and Safety Library.

Lastly, the QHSE is working on a quality self-audit that identifies proper fabrication requirements and procedures. The overarching goal is to educate member companies about the resources and key concepts available to make a consistent product that ultimately brings quality product and value to end users.

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<tr>
<td>25 Most Commonly Cited OSHA Violations</td>
<td>9 min</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accident Investigation</td>
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<td>ANSI / MSDS</td>
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<td>Back Injury Prevention</td>
<td>9 min</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compressed Gas Cylinders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Controlling Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens (Mfg.)</td>
<td>17 min</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dealing with Drug &amp; Alcohol Abuse...For Employees</td>
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<td>Dealing with Drug &amp; Alcohol Abuse...For Managers &amp; Supervisors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Driving Safety</td>
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<td>Emergency Planning</td>
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<td>Eye Safety</td>
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<td>Fall Protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire Protection / Electrical Safety</td>
<td>9 min</td>
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<td>First Aid</td>
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<td>Fitness &amp; Wellness</td>
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<td>Fit-Testing Respirators</td>
<td>12 min</td>
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<td>Forklift Operator Training</td>
<td>16 min</td>
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<td>Hand &amp; Power Tool Safety</td>
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<td>Hand, Wrist &amp; Finger Safety</td>
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<td>Hearing Conservation &amp; Safety</td>
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<td>Heat Stress</td>
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<td>Housekeeping in Manufacturing</td>
<td>10 min</td>
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<td>Industrial Ergonomics</td>
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<td>Industrial Fire Prevention</td>
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<td>Ladder Safety</td>
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<td>Lock Out / Tag Out</td>
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<td>Machine Guarding Safety</td>
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<td>Office Safety</td>
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<td>OSHA Log 300</td>
<td>13 min</td>
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<td>OSHA Recordkeeping for Managers, Supervisors &amp; other Employees</td>
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<td>Personal Protective Equipment</td>
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<td>Portable Grinders &amp; Abrasive Wheels</td>
<td>12 min</td>
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<td>Pre-Trip Inspection for Light Trucks</td>
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<td>Reporting for Work, Your Safety Responsibilities</td>
<td>10 min</td>
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<td>Respirators &amp; How to Use Them</td>
<td>12 min</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safe Operation of Overhead Cranes</td>
<td>12 min</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safety Audits</td>
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<td>Safety Showers &amp; Eye Washes</td>
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<td>Slips, Trips &amp; Falls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisor’s Guide to Accident Investigation</td>
<td>12 min</td>
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<td>Unsafe Acts; Human Behavior</td>
<td>11 min</td>
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<td>Welding Safety</td>
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<td>Winter Driving</td>
<td>12 min</td>
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<td>Workplace Stress</td>
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The founders of Slingmax® Rigging Solutions are proud to announce the launching of their new training company – the Rigging Institute LLC! Congratulations to Mike Riggs who has been named President and Tom DeSoo who has been named Vice President. Rigging Institute, which is headquartered in Knoxville, TN, adds a new element to the rigging training arena. Not only do the trainers have decades of training experience, the founders have been manufacturing rigging equipment since the 1960’s. CEO Scott St. Germain states, “The demand for quality rigging training has increased dramatically. To satisfy our customers’ needs, we decided the best solution was to create a new company solely dedicated to professional rigging training. We’ve been training end users since my father started I&I Sling back in 1963, so this is a natural progression. Ultimately, it is our customers who determine what we do; we ask questions, we listen and then we react accordingly.”

Rigging Institute offers courses in Rigging Theory, Sling and Hardware Inspection, Crane Signaling and preparation classes for NCCCO rigging certification. Classes vary in length from 4 hours to 16 hours and utilize current industry standards and practices as well as real world examples from the field. All courses over 4 hours receive a written test and passing grades earn a certificate and wallet sized training credentials card.

Rigging Institute currently has 5 expert trainers on staff. In addition to offering training at our Knoxville headquarters and at customer locations throughout North America, we now have 5 dedicated field training centers at the following rigging shops: Alloy Sling Chain (Chicago), Bishop Lifting Products (Houston), I&I Sling (North Carolina), John Sakach Company (St. Louis) and Lift-It Manufacturing (Los Angeles). Future plans include opening additional training centers throughout North America in support of regional Slingmax® Dealers. Please visit www.rigginginstitute.com for further information.
Too many people work on a business model and never waver from it,” says Dan Giannattasio, president of the Jacksonville, FL-based Southeast Rigging, Inc.; adding, by way of understatement, “But we occasionally do.” Giannattasio’s first departure from the conventional wisdom was to buy the company in July 2002, when it became evident that the severe recession was not about to quickly go away. In one sense, as Giannattasio says, “I didn’t have any choice.” Giannattasio was himself a victim of the recession. He was laid off. Giannattasio worked for eight years at Alabama Sling, a Division of Wire Rope Corporation, moving up to general manager. Leaving in the mid 1980s having been promoted to Wirerope Corporation home office for another 14 years then becoming manager of the Allied Operations Division; which, he says, “dealt with everything other than wire rope.” Then, for 2 & 1/2 years he was president of the Eastern Region at Certex.”But soon after 9-11 I was laid off, along with many others,” he says. Although Giannattasio didn’t have any choice about being laid off and needing to get back to work, was 2002 the best time to purchase a business? Giannattasio believes it was. He purchased what was then a division of the Baltimore, MD-headquartered Indusco Group, recently acquired by Mazzella Lifting Technologies, who had bought what had been Indusco in Florida for over 30 years, in 1987. They had owned it for 15 years before selling it to Giannattasio. “Indusco was a good company, but its Florida outlet was struggling,” says Giannattasio."It wasn’t aggressive and was trying to do too many things. It had expanded into industrial supplies and appeared to have become a jack of all trades and master of none. I felt there was an opportunity if we returned our focus to rigging products.” Giannattasio didn’t start off alone. He brought onboard some of his colleagues from Certex, keeping the best of Indusco employees while replacing others. One key person who joined Giannattasio was Scott Elliott, who bought into the company and is co-owner and vice-president. Elliott also started out at Alabama Sling, running the sling shop there as Operations Manager. He then worked at WireCo for another five years before moving on as manager of the Alabama group at Certex. While terribly disastrous for so many, the hurricanes and oil spills have been good for us,” reports Giannattasio. He adds that one of the main reasons for the company’s success is that three major vendors supported them from the start; WireCo, Campbell Chain and Southwest Wire Rope. They were very supportive and didn’t shrug us off.” A number of other good vendors then joined in with their support. “We went from being a weak third to a contender for the number one spot in our market.” says Elliott. Southeast Rigging’s market radius runs about 150 miles each direction. They go south to Jupiter, straight west to Tallahassee, southwest to Lakeland and north through Georgia to the South Carolina border. “Our equipment allows us to fabricate up to three inch diameter wire rope slings and our proof loader is the largest in the state, half a million pounds and 70 feet long,” Giannattasio reports, “We’ve expanded our building twice, from roughly 18,000 to 25,000 square feet. We also purchased a small company called Lifting Products in 2008 that got us into the precast concrete industry and have also added both hoist and block repair. Some of our successes have been due to having a lot of rigging inspections and putting on safety seminars, which our competitors have shied away from. Our biggest assets are our people and our service. I know everybody says that, but we feel it’s true in our company. We’ve set up the system so orders that come in go out the same day or the next, whether they’re requested to or not and we’ve streamlined our shop processes.”
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But perhaps the key reason for the company's success, explains Giannatasio, “is that now we have the latitude to act quickly to make decisions in terms of sales and marketing. Some companies totally worry about numbers such as inventory turnover, cash flow, revenue growth and so on. Although these are all very important, sometimes decisions have to made which compromise or contradict business models.” As an example, Elliott says that, “due to our experience and good relationship with vendors in the industry, we tend to order intruckload and container quantities. As the economy was going down, there were a lot of special buying opportunities so we stocked up on inventory while other companies, of course, were reducing their inventory. This means our inventory turns looked poor but we knew that, in the long run, we would profit by it.”

Another example of this counterintuitive strategy, Giannatasio cites that, “while other companies seek to extend their credit lines and/ or go into debt to get through the tough times, Southeast Rigging took the opposite approach. We had a three year note when we purchased the business, but paid it off early,” he says. “And we had a ten year mortgage on the building, which we paid off in six years. Having a debt free company has its advantages. Too many people work on a business model and never waver from it but, as is evident, we occasionally do.”

What might have been a bad initial decision, Giannatasio concedes, is that initially they bought the rights to continue the use of the name Indusco for his business. “Even though that company fell on hard times, it had a loyal customer base in the state of Florida, so, at the start we felt we could not afford to lose a single customer. Maybe that was a mistake. For even though Indusco is a vendor, it is also a competitor on some government business, so we’ve recently changed our name to Southeast Rigging.”

The company has three full-time and one part-time salesmen, along with four inside salespeople. “At our weekly sales meetings, we talk about territories,” Elliott says. “We dissect different areas and see where the opportunities are and where we can best utilize our advantages.”

Elliott adds that the company is fully computerized and has added a website, which previously did not exist and is now in the process of updating it. “We’re making some changes so people will be able to link up with vendors more easily, as well as to be able to order using the web,” he says. He adds that they have have come out with a new brochure which will compliment both the literature of the major vendors as well as what’s on the website.

Says Giannatasio, “The key to the success of any company is having good people. We have good people and we are continuing to train our personnel and encouraging them to have input into our growth and improvement.” When asked what the company does to both retain good employees as well as motivate them, Giannatasio replies, “one of the best things we do is bring everybody, not just the salespeople, into some kind of bonus or commission program. This is based on both individual and group performance. Everybody has a chance to get some kind of bonus. This makes them aware that they have an impact on the improvement and success of the company.”

In terms of AWRF, Giannatasio has been a member since 1984, and was on the Board of Directors for six years in the 1990s. Elliott became involved in the association in the late 90s. For the first couple of years of their new venture they did not join AWRF, due to working 60-70 hours a week. Then, as their hours returned closer to normal, they have again become involved. “Nearly all of our key vendors are key members of AWRF,” says Giannatasio. “Our AWRF contacts have been invaluable. Chief Executive Jeff Gilbert has been a good resource, as have many of the directors. We find the programs are all helpful, especially the new product exhibits at the P.I.E. meetings.”

Both owners wear many hats, but Giannatasio is involved primarily with financials/sales/marketing/insurance and Elliott with accounting/computers/specialty sales/operations. Giannatasio, 58, is engaged to marry his fiancée Felicia, in November. From his previous marriage he has two daughters, Kelly, 38 and Amanda, 21. His son Brett, 32 also works for the company in purchasing and as an inventory coordinator. Giannatasio names golf as a hobby, though says he has little time for it and adds he has recently purchased a house on St. John’s River as a getaway. Elliott, 39, and his wife Karen, share in their hobbies of boating and fishing. Elliott adds, “Both Dan and I got into this business because our fathers were in this business.”

Concerns regarding the future, Giannatasio says, “are inflation for steel and synthetic products, as well as health insurance costs.” In terms of the economy, Giannatasio says “I think, in talking with friends within our industry, that things are picking up in other areas; on the East Coast,
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On May 23, 2011, additional testing was performed at our Greensboro, North Carolina facility which further substantiated the benefits of rifling technology. We made twenty slings with a catalog breaking strength of 200,000 lbs – ten slings used standard covers and ten slings used rifled Covermax® covers. The standard cover slings broke at an average of 208,000 lbs, a 5.2 Design Factor. The rifled cover slings broke at an average of 244,000 lbs or a 6.1 Design Factor. This is an increase in strength of +17% or +36,000 lbs per sling. And keep in mind; the material and labor are identical for all slings.

Another advantage of this astounding new technology is the consistency of sling breaking strength. The ten slings made with standard covers had a deviation between high and low failure points of 50,000 lbs, from 178,000 to 228,000 lbs. The rifled Covermax® slings had a deviation between high and low of only 11,000 lbs or from 239,000 to 250,000 lbs. Furthermore, the weakest rifled cover sling still broke 11,000 lbs higher than the strongest standard cover sling. Keep in mind; all 20 slings had an identical amount of strength bearing core yarn and all weighed exactly the same.

CONCLUSIONS FROM TESTING:

1. Increased strength to weight ratio. 17% higher breaking strength with same amount of core yarn.
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The newly acquired Indusco is a 103-year-old company based in Baltimore, MD and was previously owned by Howard Schloss. It also consists of a network of rigging shops located along the East Coast and in the South that support a diverse customer base. This network includes Indusco companies, J. Henry Holland Corp., Alabama Sling Center and Tennessee Sling Center. Indusco has built its 100-plus year reputation on quality products and dependable customer service.

In addition to its headquarters in Baltimore, MD, Indusco has additional locations in Capitol Heights, MD, Chicago, IL, Virginia Beach, VA, Hampton, VA, Birmingham, AL, Chattanooga, TN and Memphis, TN.

“Our employees are excited to combine forces with another experienced, family-owned industry leader,” said Craig Hayward, president of Indusco. “Personally, I am thrilled for the opportunity to work with Tony Mazzella and his management team, many of whom I have known for the past ten years. Tony and I share a common vision with respect to building organizational strength through the implementation of best practices and continuing our growth through the acquisition of other family-owned and operated businesses within our industry.”

Mazzella Lifting Technologies is a 57-year-old family-owned company based in Cleveland, OH. In addition to its status as a major Midwest provider of wire rope and rigging hardware, Mazzella Lifting Technologies also engineers and manufacturers below-the-hook lifting devices, manufacturers overhead cranes and services overhead cranes.
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In addition to its headquarters in Cleveland, OH, Mazzella Lifting Technologies has additional locations in Canton, OH, Cincinnati, OH, Detroit, MI, Pittsburgh, PA and Charlotte, NC.

“The organization resulting from this acquisition offers far more than an expanded geographic footprint,” said Tony Mazzella, president and CEO of Mazzella Lifting Technologies. “The enhanced product offering and value-added services will enable our team of experienced personnel an increased opportunity to grow market share and expand our relationships with our customers.”

Tony Mazzella and Craig Hayward will be responsible for running Mazzella Holding Companies. To learn more about Mazzella Holding Company, visit these web sites:

- **Mazzella Lifting Technologies**
- **The Indusco Group**
- **J. Henry Holland Corp.**
- **Alabama Sling Center**
- **Tennessee Sling Center**
- **Sheffield Metals**

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**About Mazzella Lifting Technologies**

Founded in 1954, Mazzella Lifting Technologies offers all styles of slings, cranes, hoists, engineered lifting devices along with the training and in-field inspection and repair services that support the products. Mazzella serves many market segments, including: steel, construction, energy, vehicle and durable goods. The prestigious Weatherhead School of Business at Case Western Reserve University named Mazzella to its list of the top 100 fastest growing Northeastern Ohio companies in 2001, 2002 and again in 2007. For more information, visit www.mazzellalifting.com.

**About The Indusco Group**

Founded in 1908, Indusco brings an unmatched level of commitment of dependability and service to customers over 100 years later. In addition to serving contractors and steel erectors, their diverse customer base also encompasses the shipbuilding, mining, military and transportation industries throughout the United States. For more information, visit www.induscowire.com.

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U.S. Economic Situation

In 2010 the U.S. economy expanded by +3.0% after declining by -3.5% in 2009. In the year up to the second quarter of 2011, economic activity (GDP) slowed – posting a gain of just +1.6%. Higher food and energy prices took a toll on consumer spending (70% of the U.S. economy). Business spending on equipment and software slowed, but still grew at a fairly brisk pace, and export growth was strong. Additionally, temporary supply-chain interruptions checked growth in the second quarter.

U.S. manufacturing has made a strong recovery. A massive restocking effort, the automotive industry revival and strong overseas demand boosted U.S. manufacturing output. After falling by -11.2% in 2009, industrial production was up by +5.3% in 2010. Manufacturing remained strong in the first quarter but slowed in the second quarter. Moderate growth rates in Europe, along with supply constraints following Japan’s disasters (particularly in the automotive industry) have undercut momentum.

Two-way trade flows were much higher than expected in 2010 given the steep declines experienced in 2009. Rapid growth in emerging economies and a weaker dollar should keep export growth strong this year.

The housing industry remains in a slump. Improvement in the labor markets, affordable prices and low mortgage interest rates have not been enough to trigger an upturn in housing activity. Compared with peak levels, housing starts were down by -73% in the second quarter. Single-family starts were off by -78% and multi-family starts were down by -60%. Uncertainty over the direction of home prices and tight lending standards are overwhelming positive forces like home affordability. Stronger, sustained job growth and reducing the supply of foreclosures will figure large in stabilizing home prices and reviving the industry’s performance in 2012.

Declines in private nonresidential construction are moderating but have not yet touched bottom. Lower property values and reduced rental incomes mean financing is difficult to obtain. Excess inventory will likewise constrain new construction through the remainder of 2011. By next year, we should start to see recovery. Government construction suffered a downturn in 2010 and the rate of decline was even steeper in the second quarter of this year. Ebbing stimulus funds and concerns over the budget deficits will keep new government construction in check.

Business spending for high-tech equipment and software moderated a bit in 2q11. Capital spending outside the tech sector was more robust. Companies have accumulated cash and are busy with equipment purchases that were deferred during the recession. However, uncertainty regarding the near-term outlook is causing some companies to hold back on buying new equipment until orders accumulate.

Oil and natural gas drilling jumped in the second quarter as energy companies brought idle rigs back on line in response to rising prices.

The Federal Reserve and the Administration both are stepping back from the expansionary policies of the last two years. The Federal Reserve completed the purchase of $600 billion of treasury securities (otherwise known as QE2) in June. The Fed announced it will leave its target lending rate at 0.0% to 0.25% until the middle of 2013. On the fiscal side, further significant federal stimulus measures now seem unlikely. Concerns over the rising budget deficit are pushing fiscal policy in the direction of austerity.

Outlook: GDP hit a bump in the road during the first half of 2011. The second half is looking a little better. The LAEDC forecasts real GDP will increase by +1.7% overall in 2011. Growth will accelerate in 2012. This outlook assumes vehicle production returns to trend levels, nonresidential construction stabilizes and a pick-up in business equipment and consumer spending. Housing and state/local government spending will remain weak.
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Industrial Prices On The Rise, Again

Industrial commodity prices plunged in 2009, the worst year of the recession. Since then, prices of most commodities have returned to previous highs as the economic recovery spread around the world. Initially, the recovery process was based on a turnaround in manufacturing that increased demand for industrial materials, partly to restore inventories from the rock-bottom levels reached in 2009.

While the push to refill distribution pipelines and to re-start manufacturing lines accounted for much of the growth in 2010, more fundamental factors are driving the economy in 2011. Additions to business inventories accounted for over half of the U.S. economy’s growth rate in 2010 but were markedly less important during the first two quarters of 2011. U.S. manufacturing production overall was up by +4.1% in the year to June 2011, with a number of metal-intensive sectors standing out: fabricated metal products, machinery, primary metals, high-technology products, aircraft and heavy-duty transportation equipment.

However, several unexpected events slowed the global economy during the first half of 2011. The March disasters in Japan were likely the most influential, accompanied by weak consumer spending in the U.S. In Europe, better-than-expected performances by Germany and France were largely offset by weakness in the peripheral nations and fragility in financial markets caused by sovereign debt issues. Chinese growth was solid during the first half (2nd quarter GDP was up by +9.5% over the year), but here too there are concerns about a slowdown in the 2nd half. Domestic interest rates are rising to dampen inflation and prevent a real estate boom/bust cycle, and export growth to the U.S. and Europe is at risk. China bears close watching, as it is a big player in the steel industry and in industrial commodity markets.

The World Steel Association recently forecast that world demand for steel will increase by +76 million MT in 2011, an annual increase of +5.9% (vs. +13% in 2010). Chinese demand will rise by about +29 million MT (+5%), which implies a +47 million MT increase (+6.6%) for the rest of the world.

Industrial commodity prices are very sensitive to the economic cycle. Thus, they declined drastically during the 2009 recession--as demand plunged and inventories were reduced--and then turned up sharply in 2010, reflecting in part the need to replenish manufacturers’ and distributors’ stocks. However, commodity prices continued to rise in early 2011, despite the lesser importance of re-stocking this year. What’s going on here? Financial commodity buyers—hedge funds, pension plans and the like—also returned to the commodity markets in a big way, re-establishing “long” investment positions they’d dropped during the financial crisis.

On the supply side, much of the steel industry production capacity that was shut down during the recession has been re-started, and some new capacity is gradually coming into the market. Ordinarily, this would cause steel prices to moderate, but soaring commodity prices are plaguing steel producers too. They are trying to recoup higher prices of their primary raw materials—scrap, iron ore and coking coal.

Volatility in global financial markets complicates the analysis even further. On the one hand, economic growth could slip further in the major steel-consuming nations, just as happened several years ago. On the other, the slowdowns in the U.S. and China could prove temporary, in which case steel demand might weaken over the next few months and then resume its growth trajectory. The outlook for prices depends on whether the financial markets are giving true signals of a coming economic slowdown or just reacting very strongly to the changes occurring in nations with difficult government debt problems. Another wild card: financial demand for commodities could evaporate in either case, driving prices down.

Whatever happens in financial markets, it’s important to focus on trends in the major U.S. consuming industries—as shown in Table 1. Beyond those, watch the global economy. And please, stay tuned!

This material was prepared by the Kyser Center for Economic Research, Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation:
Nancy D. Sidhu, PhD
Vice President and Chief Economist
Kimberly A. Ritter-Martinez
Associate Economist

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* Average price for April, May and June 2011.
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Eric Noiva is a graduate of Champlain College in Burlington, VT where he attained his Bachelor’s Degree in Business Management. He will be supporting our expanding aircraft cable and wire rope sales in the bulk rope and rigging markets.

Amanda Sabourin graduated from the University of Connecticut’s School of Business with a degree in Marketing and concentration in Professional Selling. Amanda will be responsible for continuing the growth we are experiencing in specialty markets, including medical wire and cable, knitted wire mesh, and aircraft flight controls.

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Profit Improvement Report

Productivity Is Only Part Of The Answer

During the course of the last two decades distributors have made significant improvements in employee productivity. Sales per employee, the most widely-used measure of productivity, has advanced steadily. In large part, the increase is due to the application of new technology. However, this productivity surge has not resulted in lower payroll expenses, either as a percent of sales or as a percent of gross margin. When it comes to payroll control, distributors are in something of a rut.

The problem is not that technology does not lead to higher levels of employee productivity; it certainly does. The issue is that over time payroll growth tends to increase right along with sales growth regardless of the level of productivity. Every 5% increase in sales ultimately leads to a 5% increase in payroll costs.

This report will examine the nature of the rut and the possible paths for improvement in the future. It will do so by addressing two topics:

- **Payroll Sensitivity** — An examination of how even small changes in payroll control can dramatically increase profitability.
- **Going Beyond Productivity** — Suggestions on how payroll control can be enhanced by means other than productivity gains.

Payroll Sensitivity

The very good news is that major improvements in payroll performance are not required. Even very small improvements result in dramatic improvements in bottom-line performance. An analysis of this reality is presented in Exhibit 1.

The first column of numbers in the exhibit reviews the performance of the typical AWRF member based upon the latest PROFIT report. As can be seen, the typical firm has sales of around $7,000,000 at a gross margin of 30.0%. This produces a pre-tax profit of $245,000 or 3.5% of sales.

 Expenses are heavily weighted towards payroll. Of the $1,855,000 in total expenses, 67.9% of them are payroll and fringe benefits, or $1,260,000. Clearly, controlling payroll is one of the keys to enhanced profitability.

The last three represent three different assumptions about sales and payroll growth. In all three instances sales volume has increased by 5.0%. The only differences in any of the columns is the change in payroll expense.

In the Negative Delta column payroll expense (including both salaries and fringe benefits) has increased by 6.0%. This means it has grown 1.0% faster than sales have grown. The difference is so small, it would almost seem irrelevant. However, the profit implication is large.

Under the Negative Delta scenario, profit actually decreased by 0.1%. This is the classic case of selling more and enjoying it a lot less. Clearly, following this path is not an option. However, given that the delta between sales and payroll growth is so small, it is a path many firms will follow.

In the Productivity Parity column payroll and fringe benefits have increased by 5.0%, right along with sales. As noted earlier, this tends to be what happens for AWRF members over the long run.

Even with Productivity Parity profit increases only as fast as sales growth. If profits are good, they remain good. If they are inadequate, they remain inadequate. Nothing really changes within the firm. The firm is not leveraging its sales growth in any way.

Finally, in the Positive Delta column payroll has only increased by 4.0%. The firm has been able to generate a 1% improvement in payroll effectiveness. Seemingly, not a difference worth discussing.

Only in the Positive Delta column do things get better. Payroll as a percent of sales begins to decline, albeit slowly. At the same time, profit increases by a full 10.1%, even though sales only increased by 5.0%. If this can be done systematically for three, four or five years, the entire character of the firm can be changed.

If it were easy to do, of course, every firm would do it. The very real problem is that generating sales growth beyond the level of payroll growth is a very difficult undertaking. It requires rethinking the workload.
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**Going Beyond Productivity**

Continuing to improve employee productivity is essential for success. However, simply improving productivity is not enough. Something else must be added to the mix. In simplest terms, productivity involves increasing the speed with which work is completed. The additional approach simply involves doing less work.

Doing less work sounds like it should be easy. In reality, doing less is actually quite difficult. It necessitates a complete rethinking of what is important within the firm.

There are three attack points in the effort. First, completely marginal accounts that eat up a disproportionate share of the firm’s payroll costs can be eliminated. This involves only a very few accounts, but has major cost implications.

Almost every customer profitability analysis ever conducted concludes that something close to 40% of all customers are serviced at a loss. The thought of eliminating even one account is an anathema to most managers. For the very bottom rung of customers (typically 2% of the customers) there is simply no way they can ever be serviced at a profit. Doing less actually means doing nothing for this very small group of accounts.

Second, order economics have to be changed. Even among profitable accounts there are too many small orders. Minimum order standards have to be reviewed and enforced with greater vigor. In addition, order size needs to be carefully reviewed across different customers and different sales reps. The differences in order size within the same industry are enormous. Inevitably, those firms with a meaningful minimum order standard that is fairly enforced generate higher profits than those that have no standard or enforce it randomly.

Finally, the firm’s service profile should be reviewed periodically. In the rush to gain volume too many firms have added services that few, if any, customers actually appreciate. Those services that generate expense without revenue should be eliminated. Research continually demonstrates that customers don’t really want more services. They want basic services performed better. They want a better in-stock position and greater order accuracy. Interestingly, doing these better would actually lower payroll costs. No reorder processing, no error correction.

**A Managerial Sidebar:**

**Combining Gross Margin and Payroll**

The two big drivers of profitability for AWRF members are payroll and gross margin. Each of these is usually examined in isolation. For AWRF members payroll is 18.0% of sales and sales per employee is $260,833. Both figures need to be monitored on an on-going basis.

At the same time, the gross margin percentage for the typical AWRF member is 30.0%. Again, this requires constant monitoring as even small changes have a very large impact on the bottom line.

In some instances it is useful to combine gross margin and payroll performance into a single measure. That measure is the Personnel Productivity Ratio (PPR) which expresses payroll costs as a percent of gross margin dollars.

For AWRF members the figure is 60.0%. That means that 60.0 cents of every gross margin dollar must go to payroll. The remaining 40.0 cents of each margin dollar is available to cover all other expenses and contribute to profit.

The advantage of the PPR is it allows the firm to monitor decisions that may impact both gross margin and payroll simultaneously. For example, firms may move into service categories which have high margin, but require higher payroll. The PPR provides a measuring tool for such actions.

**Moving Forward**

Payroll expense has always been important. It has always been a topic of management concern. Unfortunately, it has always been approached as an area where new and better systems will save the day. They haven’t done so in the past; they are unlikely to do so in the future.

It is time to think strategically about actually reducing the workload. It is not a glamorous area of endeavor. It is one where there are significant profit opportunities, though. Working less is just as good as working faster.

**About the Author:**

Dr. Albert D. Bates is founder and president of Profit Planning Group, a distribution research firm headquartered in Boulder, Colorado.

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CABLECON 528L
DEDICATED DIGITAL LOAD CELL INDICATING SYSTEM FOR NEW OR EXISTING HORIZONTAL OR VERTICAL PROOF TESTING MACHINES

The Cablecon 528L digital load cell indicating system is used to improve the accuracy and production of existing Prooftest machines (analog pressure gages) and can also be installed on New Prooftest machines. The Cablecon 528L consists of a Digital readout and Custom Designed Standard or Heavy Duty Load Cell(s). The Cablecon 528L system will insure the prooftest machine to pass ASTM E4 force calibration/verification standard.

The Cablecon 528L also can be used with our proven CLT computer software. The CLT is a special computer program that will produce a test certificate with all customer and product information. Along with the ‘Peak Load’ reading, time duration and other pertinent test information. During the actual test the operator can view the current test in real time from the load vs. time graph. The test can be automatically stored and printed. And old tests can be viewed and reprinted from the database and printed at any time.

LOAD CELLS: Strainsense Enterprises designs and manufactures custom, standard grade and Heavy Duty grade load cells. The Heavy Duty grade load cells are best suited for applications of destructive testing, shock loads, and where large bending moments exist. All of our load cells can be designed for an existing prooftest machine (different thread variations are possible). Strainsense load cells are designed and manufactured to surpass the ASTM E4 +/-1% calibration standard. Strainsense will also Evaluate, Repair, and Test other manufacturer load cells. Reducing the cost and down time of buying a new load cell.

MADE IN U.S.A.

DESIGNED AND MANUFACTURED BY:

STRAINSENSE ENTERPRISES, INC.
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BEATING THE RECESSION
Counterintuitive Moves, Characterize the Success of Southeast Rigging

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the Midwest and even the Gulf Coast.” What he does know is that the economy in Florida and Georgia, where 90 percent of his business is, “was flying high before the recession took hold but then dropped faster and is slower in recovery. The fallout in the commercial and industrial properties is still too high. Too much inventory has led to too many foreclosures which stymie any type of building. The home market and infrastructures in Florida are still having a hard time recovering.”

“Nevertheless”, Giannattasio adds, “Maybe we’re naïve but I still think there are many companies out there that are dissatisfied with the service they are receiving and so there is still opportunity. One thing we can say is that we are looking at acquisition opportunities, or may open another branch as we’re getting more active in other geographic markets.

Gunnebo Johnson Corporation (Tulsa, OK) is now offering Gunnebo Lifting shackles throughout North America with most models and sizes in stock. Both carbon and alloy styles available in the traditional styles of screw pin or bolt, nut, & cotter pin. The standard finish is galvanized bow and pin or bolt. Gunnebo Lifting shackles meet US Fed. Spec. RR-C-271, ASME B30.26, & EN13889. While the size range varies with the model, Gunnebo Lifting shackles are generally offered in 1/2” through 3 1/2” sizes. Most models are DNV 2.7-1 type approved. An “Arctic” shackle for cold weather applications is also available. Please contact Gunnebo Johnson Corp. at 800-331-5460 for a distributor or visit our Web site at www.gunnebojohnson.com

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J.C. Renfroe & Sons, the leading manufacturer and marketer of quality industrial lifting clamps for over 70 years, is now offering the option of RFID (radio frequency identification) enabled clamps. The embedded chip offers the capability of accessing user-supplied data, which could include:

- Catalog specifications
- Maintenance instructions
- Maintenance updates
- Use history
- In-service date & inspection records
- Manufacturing and training contact information.

For your nearest distributor, call 1-800-874-8454 or email at sales@jcrenfroe.com.