

Safe travels for CNC-turning machine

Machine-tool manufacturer one of first to implement new cable carrier system

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igus® offers Guidelok, a horizontal guiding system designed to stop metal chips from causing abrasion and wear in long travel cable carrier applications.

Guidelok holds a cable carrier's upper and lower runs apart over long distances when they would normally glide on top of one another. This means metal debris cannot settle between the two runs and cause abrasion.

The new cable carrier system is already being used successfully by one machine-tool manufacturer, who replaced a heavy steel chain with Guidelok to avert potential damage from large metal chips. Guidelok was also lower cost than other steel chains or sophisticated long-travel systems available.

5,000 machines worth of experience

Tornos Gurutzpe S.A. has been in business for 52 years and has delivered well over 5,000 machines over that period. Specializing in large-capacity lathes, the company sells to customers in the United States, Europe, India and elsewhere. It supplies turbine parts for power plants, drill pipes for oil production, laminated and hydraulic cylinders. Its best-known customers include suppliers of Spanish oil company Repsol, and railroad companies SNCF (France) and RENFE (Spain), as well as elevator companies including ThyssenKrupp Elevators and U.S. company Halliburton.

The company's latest horizontal CNC-turning machine, the A-2000 4G CNC, is designed to be reliable, resilient and efficient: top requirements for lathe buyers all over the world. It required a cable-carrier solution that was suitable for unsupported long travels and hot metal chips.

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About 30 machines leave the Gurutzpe factory each year.

The company's focus is on the durability of each machine, according to sales manager Oscar Anitua, "Even decades-old machines made by us are still operated by our customers."

An initial prototype of the new A-2000 4G CNC was delivered to a customer in the wind-energy sector equipped with two horizontal Guidelok systems running side-by-side over a distance of 44 feet.

Plastic more resistant than heavy steel

Joaquín Orbegozo, head of electrical engineering at Gurutzpe, is convinced of the advantages of Guidelok, "The cable carriers are rugged, rigid and reliable."

He explains this to customers, "Sometimes one says, I would have liked this or that machine, but with a metal cable carrier." Then Orbegozo explains the benefits of lighter, robust plastic cable carriers, demonstrating that they can easily tolerate the weight of a grown man.

If another customer has a concern that, during the machining process, hot metal chips could eat through the plastic, Orbegozo takes a soldering iron and presses it onto the cable carrier in a few different places, "When customers see that this cannot damage the cable carrier, they are convinced."

"Plastic cable carriers have many advantages compared to metal versions." Joe Ciringione, sales manager for Energy Chain Systems® at igus North America, confirms, "Steel is more expensive, much heavier, and less resistant to corrosion. Plastic Energy Chains® are also quicker and easier to mount, which saves customers time and money."

Longer travels for CNC-turning machines

Gurutzpe specializes in special turning machine solutions for customers with specific requirements. Currently only two manufacturers worldwide offer prismatic-turning machines, for example. Gurutzpe also makes guide machines equipped with fixed or hydraulic steady rests and offering a great degree of flexibility.

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press release

The company has seen market demand increase when it comes to very large, long travel CNC-turning machines. "Gurutzpe has already built turning machines 66 feet long," says Anitua.

Safe cable guidance shouldn't be an issue for these applications, since igus' Guidelok cable carrier systems can cope with distances up to 164 feet.

Guidelok is designed to be modular - the side troughs are optional - and is currently available from igus North America with a four to six week lead time.

About igus

igus develops industry-leading Energy Chain[®] cable carriers, Chainflex[®] continuous-flex cables, iglide[®] plastic plain bearings, igubal[®] spherical bearings, and DryLin[®] linear bearings and guide systems. These seemingly unrelated products are linked together through a belief in making functionally advanced, yet affordable plastic components and assemblies. With plastic bearing experience since 1964, cable carrier experience since 1971 and continuous-flex cable since 1989, igus provides the right solution from over 80,000 products available from stock. No minimum order required. For more information, contact igus at (800) 521-2747 or visit www.igus.com.

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