

Rotor Clip Company

Expectations were tempered at the beginning of 2017 given uncertainty about the overall direction of the economy and the new presidential administration in the US. Rotor Clip continued promoting its full line of retaining rings, so customers could reduce their transaction and shipping costs by buying from a single source for all of their retaining ring/wave spring needs.



As the year progressed, things began to change. Industrial growth soared and unemployment hit new lows in the US and Europe, increasing a demand for consumer products and, by extension, the fasteners we all produce. The lesson this spurt taught us was that you must remain flexible and maintain the ability to respond to sudden market fluctuations, through careful planning and strong ties with key suppliers.

Despite the positive end to 2017, the future still holds its share of uncertainty. Immigration, populist movements, the threat of trade wars, all add elements of instability – a condition that is anathema to world markets. The political response to these issues will be key in easing concerns and generating the confidence needed to spur growth and conduct business as usual.

Other challenges include the dramatic shift to electric and autonomous vehicles announced in 2017 by major automotive companies, and entire countries, most notably China, which has set a goal of selling 5 million electric cars by 2020. Since so many components and assemblies go into current gasoline vehicles, it is safe to say that there will be a seismic shift in the traditional application of fasteners as these assemblies morph into simpler devices or disappear altogether. In short, the very supply chain we rely on will be altered in a most dramatic way with new players emerging and older, more traditional ones, fading away.

The fastener industry will be swept up in this change and we might possibly see an increase in acquisitions and mergers as companies vie to compete with the changing future landscape.

Rotor Clip's challenge, then, is to become more than a manufacturer of non-threaded fasteners. Rather, we need to identify the key players in this new supply chain and provide not merely products, but fastener solutions. We intend to do this through engineering and technical expertise, strategic upgrading of our equipment and facilities, attentive customer service and worldwide support. +

www.rotorclip.com

Women in the Fastener Industry

This is an era of advanced and accelerated technology when the smartphone, the cloud, supercomputers, the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, 3D printing and a myriad of other high-tech tools will boost productivity and creativity. The fastener industry is slow to change with technology, but it will change.



Women in the Fastener Industry (WIFI) membership is made of an esteemed group of accomplished women from companies representing several distinct areas of the fastener industry – manufacturers, distributors, suppliers and secondary processing. WIFI is fortunate to receive several points of view for 2017 and 2018. Here is a summary of WIFI's perception from our membership:

- + Mergers and acquisitions activity will continue for 2018.
- + E-commerce, non-fastener sales and vending programmes will most likely be added to current fastener distributors to see growth.
- + Social media presence is becoming more common for advertising and promoting businesses.
- + Mobile Apps and ordering products directly through the website has become the new normal.
- + A possible import tax and the renegotiation of NAFTA by the Trump administration have given some uncertainty to a few companies in the US market.
- + Although more stable than before, import steel costs continue to rise.
- + Increased overseas competition has a direct impact on domestically produced fasteners.
- + WIFI is optimistic that the US fastener industry will continue to see more jobs become available and businesses expand in 2018.

The lack of incoming workers for the fastener industry has been a driving issue in 2017. However, WIFI is here to remind the industry they should concentrate on the potential of women. Once women are in the 26-35 age groups, they have experience of the job market and, more importantly, life. Women want to be able to provide more for their family, overcome socioeconomic barriers, and even plan for old age. Because they have acquired these values, adult learners are more driven and resilient. Women have more at stake and therefore display tenacity and a strong work ethic. These women can more than fill the gap while we wait for our school graduates to gain interest.

To find out more information about WIFI or be part of the conversation, please visit www.fastenerwomen.com +