

COMPANY PROFILE

TORKWORX, LP

By Stephen Sisk



Torkworx, LP offers a wide portfolio of torquing and tensioning products and solutions designed to specifically meet the individual needs of its customers.

Done right the first time.

That's what it all boils down to for directing partner Pete Fuller and the 15 employees of Spring, Texas-based Torkworx. Those five words have carried the company from humble beginnings in a garage to exponential growth and a hefty portfolio of products and services—in only five years.

Drawing on a decade of experience in industrial bolting systems and technologies, Fuller started Torkworx, LP in 2008. His employer's bolting services group (which he began more than five years earlier) was purchased by a competitor.

Frustrated with the company's product line, which he described as "replaceable" and "disposable," Fuller sought an opportunity to provide customers with an alternative. In what would become the driving operating philosophy of his company, he recognized specific customer needs and demands and proceeded to provide a solution.

"What I did was look at different quality products that I was familiar with and that I believed in, and saw there would be a vacuum when this company came into play for those manufacturers. I continued my relationship with those same manufacturers with Torkworx. These are quality products made in the U.S., the U.K., and Canada."

In about a year, the company had moved out of Fuller's garage and had hired three employees. Another year passed, and they hired four more. In 2011, the company moved again—this time to a 10,000 square-foot facility.

Now, the company has 15 full-time employees and a product and service portfolio that rivals those of larger companies.



While the number of products and manufacturers is extensive, the focus is purposefully narrow. Torkworx is strictly about torquing and tensioning.

"We offer the most effective bolting equipment available that we've been able to identify through rigorous testing and in-field use," Fuller said.

That equipment includes all different types of torquing tools—manual, pneumatic, hydraulic, and electronic.

"Our products really consist of anything that's involved with controlling the way a mechanical joint goes together and comes apart," Fuller said.

That kind of versatility, according to Fuller, allows Torkworx to maintain its focus on its founding principle.

"One thing that we do really well is identifying customer needs. We allow the customer to tell us what their requirements are. Once we know those requirements, we provide an unbiased solution for that particular application."

Often, a customer's needs can't be met solely by off-the-shelf equipment. In those instances, Torkworx is able to re-engineer and modify equipment, or in some cases start fresh and develop suitable equipment through both in-house and vendor engineering personnel.

For example: If a customer has a highly-specialized, time-critical task that cannot be achieved using standard equipment, Torkworx consults with the customer to identify the task that needs to be performed. Once that has been established, the company works directly with the customer as well as vendors to build an effective custom solution specifically tuned to handle the task at hand, increasing speed and efficiency and allowing the customer to be more productive.

Torkworx' cites power generation industries as its primary client base—mostly in conventional power generation methods like gas and steam.

For more information about Torkworx' product and service offerings, call 888-502-WORX (9679), or visit www.torkworx.com.



However, the company has made significant strides in renewable energy as well.

“Most of our employees have come from a power services background. When renewable energy ramped up, we realized it was something that we needed to pursue,” Fuller said. “We’re accustomed to the customer bases in that industry, so it was an easy transition for us to extend our reach into renewable power services.”

Specifically regarding wind energy, Torkworx offers its custom E-RAD torquing tool. This is a constant rotation torque device which is controlled by computer. Based on manufacturer claims, the tool: features a lightweight architecture; is faster than traditional torque tools; offers a high degree of strength and durability; and operates quieter than conventional torquing equipment.

According to Fuller, Torkworx takes this equipment a step further with the company’s custom approach. Torkworx consults with the customer and pre-loads

data and torque specifications that are unique to tasks the customer performs on a regular basis.

For example: If an ISP or wind farm operator performs maintenance tasks a certain turbine model within their fleet, Torkworx can load all of the torque information for every bolt on the turbine into the E-RAD control module. The technician then has the ability to pull up the necessary task or bolt for that turbine, push a button, and the tool automatically sets itself for that specific application.

Another feature of the E-RAD tool is its data collection capability. Once a technician has completed a given task, the tool is then able to export that data to computer spreadsheets for maintenance record keeping and follow-up with the customer.

Additionally, a large segment of Torkworx’ wind energy portfolio involves basebolt tension checks. Although somewhat new to the company’s product and service catalog (within the last 18 months), Torkworx has seen a considerable amount of success

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with its basebolt services. According to Fuller, the company is averaging 1,200–1,500 turbine basebolt tension checks each year. Due to unique methods and technology, the company is able to perform this service much faster than what is considered normal.

“We’ve become so efficient at it that we can do a 100 percent basebolt tension check in less than one hour. We can do a ten percent check in less than 12 minutes,” Fuller said. He attributes the increased efficiency not only to the equipment and technology, but also to the skill of the labor force, who are specialized in the task.

“We went into this kind of service with experience in the power industry,” Fuller said. “We understand that time is money. The faster we can give them the turbine back, the better off they are and the more value we bring. Previously, with other contractors, it didn’t matter if they were there for ten hours or ten days. They’re charging the same hourly rate day-in, day-out. There was no incentive for them to get it done quickly.”

Torkworx is poised for continued growth in the future. Currently, the company is seeing 32 percent annual growth. That’s something that Fuller, who shares executive responsibilities at the company with his wife Kristi Fuller, attributes both to the company’s unique approach of an unbiased solution to address customer needs, as well as a culture of responsibility of ownership among the work force. Pete Fuller estimates that the total combined torquing and tensioning experience between himself and the company’s skilled labor force exceeds 100 years.

“Everybody is incentivized to perform and cut costs and increase margins,” Fuller said. “Going back to our motto, it’s in everybody’s best interest, since they have skin in the game, to get it done right the first time.”

As part of the company’s growth plan moving forward, the woman-minority-owned business is evolving to begin to serve other industries. The company travels across the nation providing its services, and sells products internationally. Currently, Torkworx is making inroads into oil/gas and sub-sea/marine markets. ✈

