

CONVERSATION

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Tell us about AeroTorque and its core philosophy.

AeroTorque's core philosophy is that you must control transient loads to control your equipment's life span. For almost 40 years, we have optimized drivetrains in extreme machines by minimizing damage from unexpected loading.

What are your duties with AeroTorque?

My focus is on communicating our message to the market and building our fleet sales. Early on in my wind career, I was focused more on our field work, with up-tower wind-turbine torque data capture. I've really done a wide variety of duties as we have built our business.

What are some of the services and products AeroTorque specializes in?

AeroTorque has two main market offerings: The WindTC is a mechani-

cal, retrofit torque control that has been proven to significantly reduce the impact of severe transient loads in wind-turbine drivetrains. Imagine the impact of reducing peak transient loads by 50 to 70 percent. The focus again is to remove the damaging loads before they can affect the equipment.

Our WindTM torque monitor is a service offering that gives owners high-resolution measurement of the real-world loading of their wind turbines.

What has been the evolution of WindTC?

When we started in wind in 2010, our initial installs were in sub-MW class turbines. We quickly moved into the MW class turbines, where we have seen even greater benefits. The WindTC has moved up from the 750 kW machines of the first installations. Our highest volume today is in the 1.5 to 2.3 MW range.

One thing our fieldwork has proven conclusively: Transient loads are occurring due to many factors and more often than expected. It is not specific to any turbine model or manufacturer; it not the fault of any component; it is core to the unique nature of wind and wind turbines.

What areas has AeroTorque pioneered to increase turbine maintenance efficiency?

The WindTC is proactive, prevent-

ing damage before it can occur. It stands on its own but when combined with other improvements, such as up-graded bearings or lubrication, it can be a game-changer in the useful life of the drivetrain.

You were recently acquired by Timken. How does that affect AeroTorque moving forward?

We see a great fit for us in Timken. They are an industry leader in bearings and other products. We share a focus on in-depth engineering and quality products. We, with our sister brand PT Tech — a world leader in torque limiters and brakes, are a bolt-on addition to Timken's mechanical power offerings. We really look forward to growing with them.

Where do you see the wind industry headed in 2017 and beyond?

Wind is here to stay! With the movement away from a PTC-driven market, the wind industry is proving that we can stand on our own. Power prices have shown that wind is economical and even the lowest cost solution in some areas. Near term, repowering and the new install boom will run its course over the next three to four years and then settle into a steady growth rate. The growth will continue to be driven by private industry and consumers, who are demanding clean and economical power. ↘