


CONVERSATION

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ITH Bolting Technology

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 ITH Bolting Technology



Tell us about ITH Bolting Technology's history and how it made a name for itself in the wind energy industry.

ITH Bolting Technology was founded in 1979 by engineer Hans Hohmann in Meschede, Germany. The first product designed and manufactured by ITH was the hydraulic bolt tensioning cylinder. From there, ITH went on to develop a complete range of tension and torque tooling intended for larger industrial bolting applications. Today, ITH also offers fasteners and services that range from technical design of bolted joints to on-site bolting.

Involvement with the wind turbine industry began in the early 1980s. Bolts of large-sized slewing bearings, which are an integral part of wind turbines, require precise and even tightening to avoid galling between the single ring units. For this type of application,

tensioning is the best bolting method because, overall, it is significantly more accurate, precise, and faster than alternative methods. ITH promoted this and became directly involved with wind turbine OEMs as they began realizing the benefits of tensioning. The wind industry has become huge over the years, and ITH has continued working with the growing number of turbine OEMs, contractors, and service companies.

ITH is family-owned and operated, and it has maintained consistent core values. We have a worldwide reach, yet we emphasize customer focus with the flexibility and speed to meet their needs. ITH has more than 50 representations and 10 subsidiaries. We work together as a global network to provide international support.

What makes ITH one of the world's leading system suppliers in bolting technology?

Being a system supplier goes far beyond delivering a set of tools. We can offer support from the design phase through the life of a bolted connection. Engineering, tools, fasteners, and service — this is our complete system that comes from extensive experience and knowledge in bolting. The extra step that sets us further ahead as a leader is our drive for innovation through continuously applying the knowledge and experience gained over the years.

What types of products and services does ITH provide to the wind energy industry, and how do these help it stand apart from its competitors?

We provide products and services from every level of our complete system of engineering, tools, fasteners, and service. ITH designs and manufactures all of its own tooling and pumps, including hydraulic bolt tensioning systems, hydraulic torque wrench systems, and nut runners, which are more commonly known as torque multipliers. Some of the services we provide include technical design of bolted joints, training, and on-site bolting. Fasteners provided include a wide range from standard to specialized.

ITH stands apart from competitors by using its full range of products and services combined with experience and knowledge to push the advancement of bolting in the wind industry. One example is the introduction of maintenance-free bolting on wind turbine tower segments with the ITH Stretch System. This is a bolting package brought together by ITH to offer the best possible technical solution.

ITH tools are used on applications throughout different wind turbines, from foundation and tower section bolts to the hub and blade slewing bearings, as well as various other applications. We supply to OEMs, construction contractors, and service

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companies for maintenance so our tooling has been widely used across the U.S. from the largest site, Alta Wind, down to single turbine projects.

How has ITH set new quality standards in the market, and what effect has that had on its role in the industry?

Better bolting solutions for slewing bearings, foundation and tower connections, and other bolted joints throughout wind turbines have positive impacts on their design, construction, and maintenance. While we continue to push adoption of these improved solutions across the wind industry,

we also use feedback from customers at each level to improve our products down to minor convenience features.

In 1995, ITH was the first market actor to be certified according to the strict requirements of DIN ISO 9001. Our strong commitment to quality persists. We were recently certified according to the updated quality management guideline DIN ISO 9001:2015.

How can wind farm owners and operators benefit from working with ITH?

From the start, we can help customers identify their tooling needs, and,

from there, we follow up with fast and reliable support. We have a large inventory of new tools and spare parts, and our service department has quick turn-around times.

What is your outlook on the wind energy industry in the U.S. going into 2016?

It's hard to predict how 2016 will go, especially with the uncertainty of the PTC extension. My general outlook is that the industry advances every year, aside from market fluctuations. The reports I've seen show that 2015 had some growth over 2014, and I think this will continue with 2016. ↘

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