

NORD PULLS THROUGH FOR PIPE HANDLING EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURER

Advance Equipment Co. in Olympia, Washington, an OEM of plastic pipe handling machines, was looking to supply its customers with a puller unit for pipe coming off of extruders. It would not be a new product to the industry; Advance would be competing with existing designs and so the need was especially great to introduce a machine of equal or better performance on the first effort.

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NORD Gear Corp. (Waunakee, WI) was brought in to assess and essentially duplicate the drive system of existing puller machines for Advance. NORD went beyond what was asked of it and provided a more efficient drive solution, creating a competitive edge for Advance’s new machine.

NORD had been tested by Advance in previous applications, the first of which pitted them against Advance’s then spec. The challenge had been to provide a superior inline gear motor for one of Advance’s most popular machines. NORD’s performance resulted in an unusual phone call not long after the sale.

“I need to have you come down here and take a look at this gearbox that you sold us,” came the cryptic request of Dick Hoverter, president of Advance, to NORD representative DuWayne Weber. DuWayne did as asked.

Dick flipped on the machine and asked, “You hear that?”

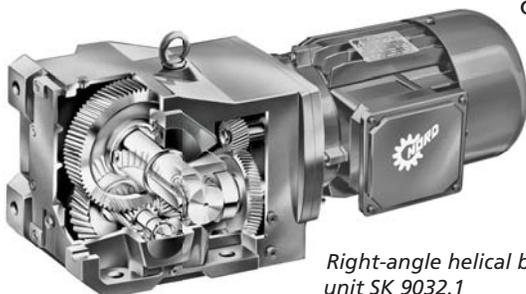
“Really, no,” answered a perplexed DuWayne. “Well, that’s what I mean,” said Dick, referring to the silence. “That one that we had – we could hear that thing running. We don’t know this is running!” Suffice to say, Dick was pleasantly surprised by the quiet running gearboxes of NORD. The absence of noise marked a quality that he had yet to encounter, but would utilize in machine designs to come, including that of the puller.



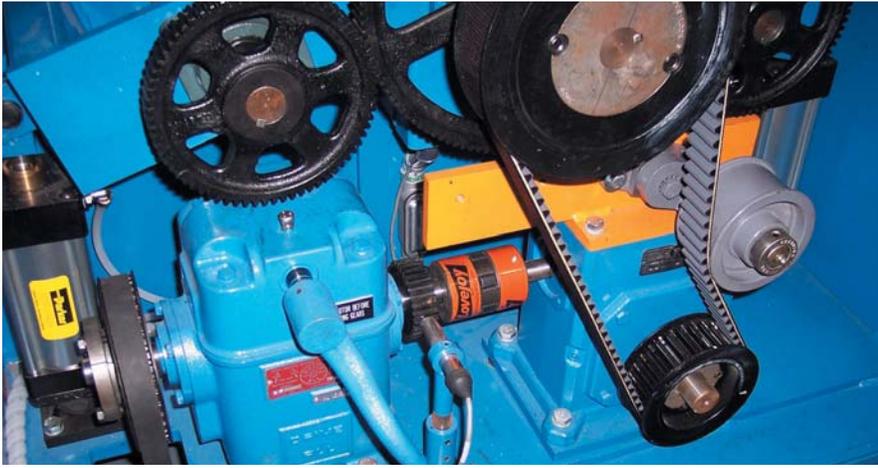
Pipe puller showing NORD hollow shaft internal gearmotor with blower to achieve 1000:1 speed ratio.

A puller’s function is to pull plastic pipe, plastic tubing and other rigid plastic extrusions out of an extruding machine. In Advance’s strongest industry, this is usually PVC pipe. The machine essentially grabs the pipe and at a closely regulated speed, drags it out of the extruder and pushes it downstream in a continuous strand before being cut to length. The job of a gearbox in such an application is to supply considerable, yet smoothly executed, pulling force at a precise speed.

The two pullers that Dick was modeling his own after, both used a motor with belts connected to a separate gearbox and a coupling to a force-feed transmission. A second drive connected to yet another set of gears. DuWayne recommended the exclusion of this unnecessarily complex



Right-angle helical bevel unit SK 9032.1



The pre-NORD solution: Pipe puller showing motor, transmission, worm reducer, and belt drives to achieve two run speeds.

arrangement by using a heavy-duty, hollow shaft gearbox instead. NORD supplied Advance with a shaft mounted, helical-bevel gearmotor with torque arm, equipped with a motor blower that would allow for very low speeds without overheating. Dick ended up with one gearmotor instead of two gearboxes and a separate motor, eliminating three pulleys

and two drive belts. For a very decent price, Advance ended up with a product that had a much stronger gearbox than any of the competing machines. "It's a lovely little design," notes Dick. "It's got this rock solid gearbox in there instead of all these individual components that will fail. "As a bonus, Dick found that the NORD unit was easier to install and keep adjusted properly.

Has NORD won a place as Advance's new spec? "Absolutely," says Dick. "Yeah, I used to buy most of my gearmotors out of a catalog because they were reasonably priced and very available, but they're lousy gearmotors! NORD has pretty much everything covered: good service, good price, good quality—there's not a whole lot more you can ask for."

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