

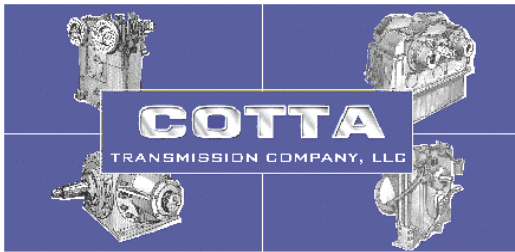
THE FLASH

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SUCCESS UPDATE: COTTA TRANSMISSION

In 1999, Rockford, Illinois-based Cotta Transmission Company began examining expansion and relocation options for its single location manufacturing and office facility. Cotta is a manufacturer of top quality highly engineered power transmission products and had operated in Rockford for 90 years. The company was established in 1909 and employed about 70 skilled manufacturing craftsmen, engineers, sales and administrative personnel. Cotta narrowed its options to a complete relocation to Beloit, Wisconsin or an expansion in Rockford, Illinois. Forward Wisconsin partnered with Rock County, Beloit and state officials in working with the firm. Meetings continued for several months regarding the possible relocation of all of Cotta's operations to Beloit. In mid-2000, top executives at the business decided to relocate to Beloit into the 63,000-square-foot BF Goodrich/Fairbanks Morse building in the Water Tower Industrial Park. In December 2000, the move was completed and the existing staff of 70 began working out of the Wisconsin facility.



Since Cotta Transmission's relocation to Beloit the company has adapted very well to its new neighborhood and has expanded its supplier base to include some experienced local talent. The facility is an excellent work environment and impressive to customers. Workflow and efficiencies improved greatly with the new floor plan. In order to better meet the stiff challenge and drive for excellence manufacturers face today, Cotta management, its skilled work force, and WMEP (Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership) teamed up to implement numerous productivity and continuous improvement initiatives. These initiatives have helped reduce costs and lead times. Cotta realized up to a 20% productivity gain for several product lines. Consequently the company is now more resilient to economic down turns and more competitive today than it was at the time of the move. Cotta continues to meet the challenge of designing and manufacturing custom transmission solutions for its diverse customer base in industrial, commercial and aerospace applications. Cotta sends sincere thanks to all the people who helped make the relocation possible.

MARKETING MISSIONS RATED AS MOST EFFECTIVE TOOL BY LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS

A survey of 400 local economic development professionals across the nation revealed that "marketing missions" were viewed as the most effective marketing technique that they used. Thirty-nine percent of the respondents rate "marketing missions" as their most effective marketing tool. Internet web pages was a close second on the list with 34 percent; followed by direct mail marketing at 21 percent and trade shows at 20 percent. Forward Wisconsin has been conducting marketing missions (a.k.a. prospecting trips / market development programs), direct mail and trade shows for 20 years and maintains a web presence. The survey was done by Growth Strategies Organization, an economic development research firm that regularly publishes economic development data and research.



CHICAGO MARKETING MISSIONS DATES SET

Forward Wisconsin will take a delegation to Chicago on April 20-22 to meet with CEOs that have expressed an interest in expanding their businesses to Wisconsin. The annual Chicago-area marketing mission will utilize direct mail to about 3000 Illinois CEOs, telemarketing to all the direct mail recipients and face-to-face meetings with those that request specific expansion interest. For more info on the mission, contact Jan Alf at 262.691.7873.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Governor's Conference on Economic Development
February 12-13 in Madison
- Chicago Area Marketing Mission
April 20-22 in Chicago metro area
- WEDA Spring Conference
May 5-6 in Brookfield
- CoreNet Global Summit
May 15-19 in Chicago
- BIO 2004
June 6-9 in San Francisco
- Greater Milwaukee Open Event
July 22-23 in Brown Deer
- PGA Championship
August 9-15 in Kohler
- International Woodworking Fair
August 26-29 in Atlanta

