



Hypneumat

By Loyd McIntosh

For almost 80 years, Hypneumat, Inc. has been a leader and innovator in the drilling and tapping industry. Hypneumat, Inc. was established in the 1940s by Earl Putrow, a self-taught inventor from northern Wisconsin, who created the world's first high-speed, automatic drilling and tapping unit. Putrow named his invention the Hypneumat, a clever combination of the words hydraulic, pneumatic, and automatic. Less than a year later Putrow established a company bearing the name of his invention, Hypneumat, Inc.

Now under the leadership of President John Weber - the fifth owner in the company's history - Hypneumat develops solutions for industrial automation along three product lines; Hypneumat, Commander, and SNOW. The Hypneumat brand includes a line of automatic high-speed drilling and tapping units, machines, and controls. Under the Commander brand, the company manufactures multiple spindle heads, and, under the SNOW brand, an array of replacement parts, clutch-type tapping heads, and fixtures.

Over the last eight decades, Hypneumat has developed a reputation as a leading supplier of automatic drilling and tapping units, which can be found in most major manufacturing industries throughout the world, everything from aerospace, to automotive, food as well as transportation. "We have over 10,000 customers worldwide," Weber says.

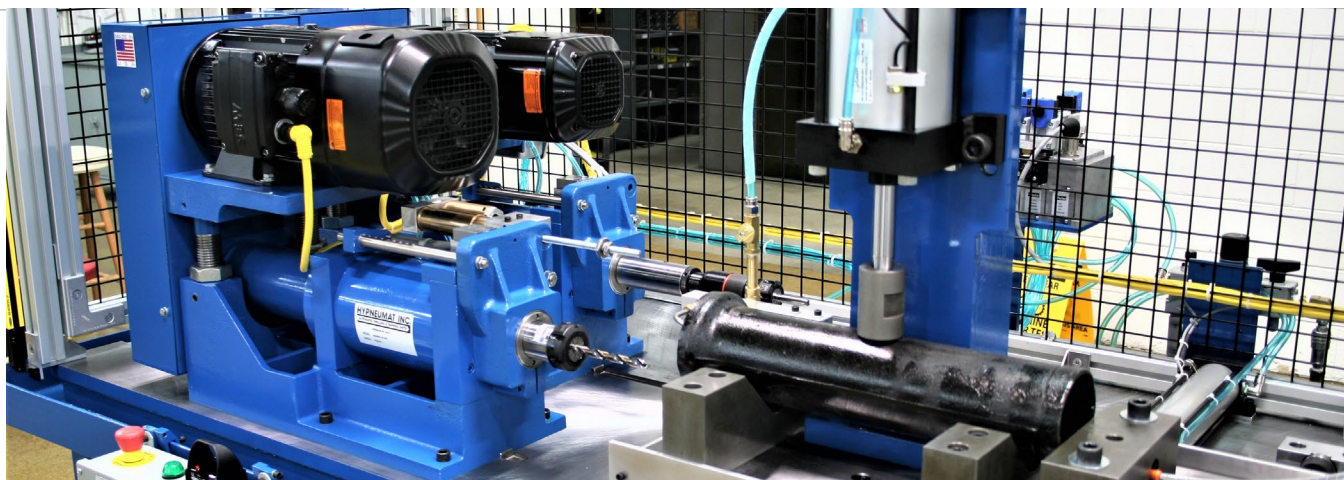
"Hypneumat continues to build on the foundation of the

same basic units, either powering and automating the process of drilling or tapping with the mechanism of a piston in a cylinder either pneumatically or hydraulically," adds Weber. "We've also developed units with more sophisticated options utilizing Servo motors with ball screw rail units."

After spending 25 years in the foundry and machining industry with a tier-one automotive supplier based in Wisconsin, including a little more than a decade in a top leadership position, Weber decided to strike out in a different direction. He spent almost two years looking for an existing business to purchase before learning that Hypneumat was for sale in 2011. A former customer of Hypneumat, Weber was familiar with its solid reputation within the drilling and tapping industry. It also didn't hurt that Weber's daily commute was more than reasonable as well. "It's less than 20 minutes from where I live, and I'm very familiar with the product, so it was kind of a win-win," says Weber.



Hypneumat currently has 19 employees, three of whom have been with the company more than 50 years, as well as some brilliant new minds that have come on board in recent years. The combination of team members with decades of knowledge to build upon with an eagerness to investigate new, innovative ideas makes Hypneumat stand



out among its peers according to Weber. "We have a long tradition of stability, and it's a good place to work. That's what caught my eye when I decided to buy the company some ten years ago."

Weber believes one of the traits that differentiates Hypneumat from the competition is the company's flexibility. "One thing that makes us stand out, in my opinion, above and beyond our competitors is we will customize our units to just about any configuration a customer wants. I am not aware of anyone building a feed unit that has 26 inches of stroke," says Weber.

"We will build units with stroke lengths from three-and-a-half inches to 26 inches. We offer many motor sizes, we'll put just about any spindle-nose type that our customers need, and can include mounting for vertical up, vertical down, or horizontal operation, you name it," adds Weber. "Our competitors build good products, but they don't tend to customize quite to the extent that we do."

Having worked in high-end manufacturing for most of his career, Weber understands first-hand how changes to one piece of equipment in one area of the plant can have a ripple effect on the entire operation. For that reason, he is a firm believer in developing custom solutions that fit into the client's production model. The Hypneumat team, Weber says, is adept at working together internally and with the client's project team to develop innovative approaches to problem-solving.

"We'll collaborate internally with customer input to come up with multiple solutions to tackle the unique challenges of the project," says Weber. "For example, the food industry. You've got to use the appropriate types of lubricants that are food-grade as well as stainless steel components to comply.

"We work closely with the customer and collaborate internally to confirm we haven't missed anything or to discover someone has come up with an idea to build a better mousetrap," adds Weber. "We'll jump on it and make proposals to the customer that would make sense for their situation."

For example, a customer of Hypneumat's approached Weber and his team about a year ago with a problem. The client expressed a need for a new builder/supplier of its

swaging machines. The client reached out to Hypneumat for a new design to meet the company's specific needs.

"We came up with a machine that would automatically apply adhesive, hydraulically swage all types of abrasive wheels to hubs with a Hypneumat unit, and auto unloads the assembled part into a bin," explains Weber. "We designed and built the machine for them, and we are now their exclusive builder of those types of machines."

Over the years, Hypneumat has embraced automation to manufacture and deliver products faster and at a lower cost than many of the competitors. An ISO 9001 registered company, Hypneumat has made significant investments into new automated systems allowing them to shorten production times, improve quality, and keep costs as low as possible.

"Over the last few years we purchased several five-axis, multiple spindle turning machines that can really speed up and automate the manufacturing process for many of the components that we build in-house," explains Weber. "We can have one person run numerous machines now without too much fanfare. We have the capability to make common components in large quantities very quickly. This allows us to be more efficient, keeping your costs under control."

Hypneumat products are very durable, with many units built decades ago and still in operation and in good working order around the world. "That's a testament to the company in and of itself." **IMD**

To learn more about Hypneumat, visit the company's website at www.hypneumat.com.

