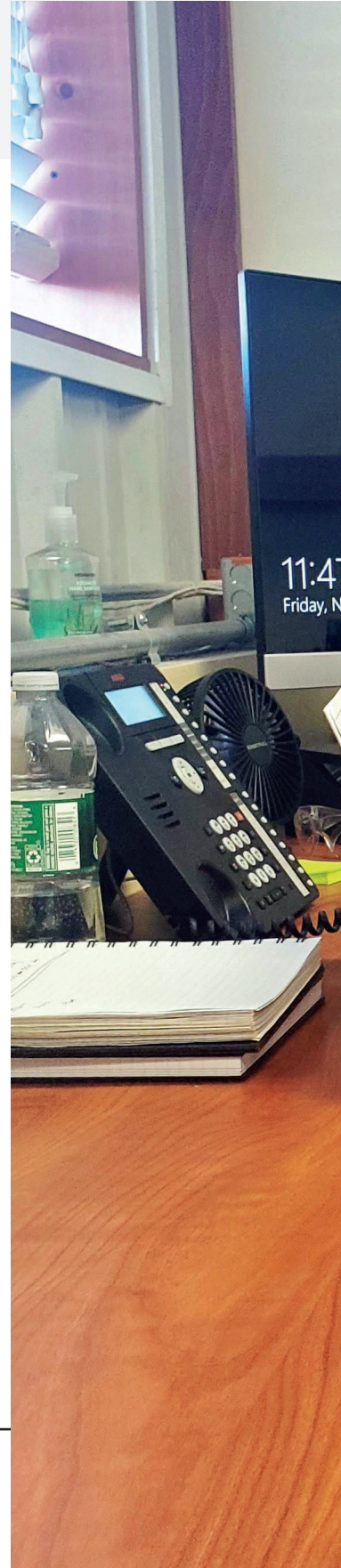




## - NES Bearing Company continues to answer call

*Customer service at heart of NES' custom bearing production*

+ + + + +









OLEAN, N.Y – It was a normal Wednesday morning at NES Bearing Company. The coffee was still hot, the lathes were turning, orders were being shipped. And then the phone rang. NES (Napoleon Engineering Services) was asked by a long-time customer to perform a condition analysis based on photographs, which ultimately led to the following question: “How quickly can you make a new cage (for this particular bearing)?” This was a long-lead material item for which there’s only one source in the world and a current lead time of approximately 8-12 weeks.



At most other bearing manufacturers, the customer would have faced a lengthy, drawn-out process or been turned away entirely. At NES, however, that call – answered within two rings – was sent directly to the chief engineer, who inquired with the nearby vice president of operations about the availability of that stock. The latter provided the piece within minutes along with confirmation that the project could be completed within a few days.

True, in this case, there was an element of luck involved that the material was readily available. But that’s not the story here. The point is that NES was able to take quick action so that this customer could make an immediate decision about how it was going to proceed. In this way, NES Bearing Company is

indeed different. It’s at the core of the Olean, New York-based company’s identity.

“We’re right here, we’re one point of contact for our entire operation,” said Chris Napoleon, NES’ chief engineer. “The manufacturing plant is 50 feet from the office in which this conversation took place. The people that make things happen from a design, manufacturing and even stock inventory standpoint are within arm’s reach – not in another state, another country or another continent.”

**NES REMAINS** bustling internally.

The company completed a 22,000-square-foot addition to its campus in 2022. It’s in the process of



+ + + + +

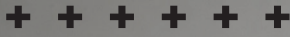


becoming compliant with AS 13-100, a supplemental standard to AS-9100, to meet the special additional requirements of certain companies. It continues to boast North America's largest independent bearing inspection and testing facility. And yet, "we can be reactive so that our customers can make a decision in real time," Napoleon said. "That's powerful."

As such, NES has a more personal, and perhaps unparalleled, relationship with the customer experience. Those with whom the company works are going to know right away if help can be provided, and in what ways. In terms of custom bearing manufacturing, the difference between Napoleon and others can be found in five key characteristics: Special features, unique materials, optimization, traceability and short lead times. Of these, traceability plays a pivotal role.

Customers often have advanced expectations for quality needs that NES fulfills related to traceability, including the need for approved suppliers for raw materials and special processes, such as heat treatment, platings and frozen processes. Additionally, NES incorporates material readiness reviews, utilizing people from multiple disciplines for print and process router approval to ensure accuracy and efficiency of the manufacturing process. Currently, it's working on meeting the specific AS 13-100 standard for aerospace customers such as Honeywell and Rolls Royce. "Our goal is to say what we do and do what we say," Napoleon noted. "And then we repeat that." It's all in the name of meeting the highest level of product reliability.





NOW IN its 26th year, NES Bearing Company continues to provide a range of services, from custom manufacturing to testing and inspection. It's heightened its presence in the aerospace industry and grown its source qualification inspection (SQI) program to bolster its reputation as world inspection leaders. NES' constant, however, is the production of standard, high-precision angular contact and split-inner ring ball bearings. And at the root of the manufacturing side is meeting specific customer requests – faster, in a more streamlined fashion and to the best of its ability.

Global lead times continue to rise. NES' mission is to assist customers in reaching the shorter lead time requirement they need or expect, provide the bearing they may not be able find elsewhere and answer that phone call within two rings. It's what sets the company apart from others.

NES can help enable customers to move closer to the proverbial finish line by being able to meet each of those five characteristics: Special features, unique materials, optimization, traceability and short lead time.

"All of this is hard work, that's why the other guys don't do it," Napoleon noted. "Our particular skill is determining what the customer really needs and creating a solution with efficiency in each of those areas."

A customer might have a general idea of what it needs, Napoleon said, but until one reviews that gameplan with a specialist in the custom bearing manufacturing field, there may be something missing or a feature that is not manufacturable. Say, for instance, that a customer desires an anti-rotation or puller groove feature on a bearing. The requirement of an additional spec shouldn't delay the design work or impact lead time. That's because what might be a challenge for others is commonplace for NES. Napoleon has a standard in place that allows it to create that design with minimal extra effort. In this way, NES Bearing Company can "plug and play" with several requests. Its message to potential customers is as straightforward as the process: "We know what works. Leave it to us."

"We're going to help align things so that the shortest distance from start to finish is a straight line," Napoleon said. "We're going to try to minimize the effort to get you what you need."

**Courtesy of J.P. Butler,**  
*Marketing Coordinator, Napoleon Engineering Services.*