



## Association News

### Mr. Shao-Feng Ji Elected as President of China Wenzhou Fastener Association

China Wenzhou Fastener Association held its fifth term (first round) annual members meeting on June 18, 2022. During the meeting, President of Wenzhou Junhao Industry Co., Ltd., Mr. Shao-Feng Ji, was elected as the new chairman of China Wenzhou Fastener Association. According to the statistics, currently there are around 1,100 fastener-related companies in Wenzhou City and more than 350 of them demonstrate the scale above the average level of the whole nation.

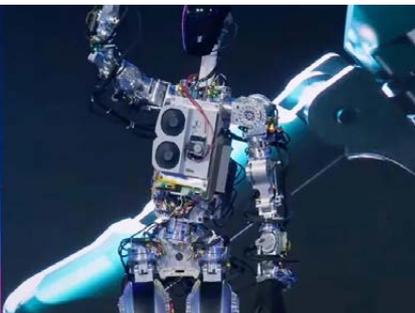
## Industry Update

### Optimus Denotes Humanoid Robots Will be Able to Handle Screw Fastening

September 30, Elon Musk revealed his humanoid robot Optimus at Tesla AI Day 2022. He said humanoid robots so far don't have a brain, that they can't handle problems on their own and are very expensive with extremely low value creation. Optimus in contrast will be extremely powerful and mass-produced up to millions of units at a cost below \$20,000, much less than a car. Production is likely to launch next year.

He said Optimus will initially perform boring or dangerous tasks including moving materials and parts in Tesla factories or fastening screws to a car with a wrench. He predicts the future robots could be used in homes, to cook dinners, cut lawns and care for the elderly, even becoming a mate to humans.

As some of the modern factories are using automated equipment to counter shortage of labor, humanoid robots in the future could be the latest option for business owners.



### European EV Sales up 31% in First Half 2022

The first half of 2022 was a rough time for the European new car market. According to the data by JATO Dynamics, new car registration dipped 14% from the same period last year, landing at 5.54 million registered cars across 27 countries. SUV and EV were main factors preventing a further decrease. SUVs had 4% less registration compared to the last period, taking up nearly 50% of the total registration. EV registration increased from 485 thousand vehicles to 633 thousand vehicles, up 31%, taking up 11.4% of the whole BEV market share, and up nearly 4 percentage points from a year ago.

The uptrend of BEV demand doesn't equally benefit all carmakers. Although Tesla still holds a large chunk of EV sales, its growth rate is lower than the market's average. With issues in new car supply due to the production halt in China as well as the increased number of market competitors, Tesla's market share dropped from 13.75% in the first half of 2021 to 13.33% in the first half of 2022.



## Vietnamese Electronics Companies in Desperate Need of Taiwanese Fasteners

Manager Nguyen Tien Dung who works for a Vietnamese electronics company said there have been many electronics and technological companies entering Vietnam from overseas recently. With that said, Vietnamese companies have limited capabilities and "they can't even supply small screws". He hopes Taiwanese companies will assist in improving technical capabilities to meet local demand for supply.

In a seminar held on September 7 on collaboration between Taiwanese and Vietnamese industry supply chains, the manager said companies from Taiwan, Japan and South Korea have been looking for new production sites since the U.S.-China trade conflict from 2018, but the limited capabilities of Vietnamese companies have rendered foreign electronics and technological companies in Vietnam reliant on import to cover their needs for small parts.

He mentioned an article from the social media as an example, which pointed out that local Vietnamese suppliers cannot even supply a single small screw. "It's a fact that we are still not capable of meeting international requirements and standards," but suppliers like Apple need small parts like small screws very much. He said Taiwanese companies are experienced in this aspect, hoping that they could share their parts with Vietnam so that Vietnamese companies can supply the parts locally without having to import them.

Up to the end of 2019, the Vietnamese electronics industry had 2,532 companies and 736 thousand employees. In 2021, the employees reached 1.3 million people. Taiwanese electronics companies in Vietnam are much concerned about supply chain issues, especially electronic manufacturing service providers and system providers. Those industries with high transport costs within the supply chain and complications in import procedures will have the highest demand for localized supply.

## Thailand Becomes the Latest EV Competing Ground



As the South Korean Hyundai Motor is enhancing deployment in Southeast Asia, its opponent BYD from China is making its way into Thailand to build a new factory, making Thailand a new ground for the face-off between South Korean and Chinese EV makers.

BYD, the second largest EV maker in the world, is locked on the rapid growth of EV market in Southeast Asia and has decided to invest USD 491 million in its first overseas plant in Thailand. The plant is expected to launch production in 2024 and will manufacture 150 thousand units per year. Thailand has set the target to raise the proportion of new EV car sales to 30% by 2030.

This March, Hyundai launched a plant in Deltamas Industrial Park in Bekasi. It is Hyundai's first manufacturing plant in ASEAN that manufactures its new BEV called IONIQ 5.

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## Energy Price Hike Could Force European Steelmakers to a Shutdown

European steelmakers could be forced to reduce production and even shut down certain plants due to soaring energy prices. Some of them warned of a potential permanent shutdown. As Germany is most dependent on Russia's natural gas, its steel industry is confronted with additional 10 billion euros of energy cost equivalent to one fourth of the steel industry's average annual revenue. German Steel Federation president Hans Juergen Kerkhoff thinks that without an immediate reaction, the steel industry could be forced to shut down in winter, leading to industrial decline and posing a threat to the German economy.

ThyssenKrupp Steel Europe AG has reduced production in Germany because of the potential decline which affects demand as well as the surging energy price which impacts the company's international competitiveness. ArcelorMittal, the world's second largest steel company, has left its steel facilities in Germany and other countries idle and its production in Europe in the fourth quarter is expected to drop 17%.

Eurofer pointed out that if the energy crisis cannot be dealt with in the near term, the industry could temporarily stretch the time frame of production halt. The metals and other energy-intensive industries could face the same predicament. Aperam, the Belgium stainless steel manufacturer, is forced to halt production for paying each month for an equivalent of last year's whole expense. Bernard Halleman, responsible for the European business of Aperam, said the company used to have 80% of its capacity running during annual maintenance in summer, but this capacity has been down to 50% after Russia cut down natural gas supply at the end of June and drove energy prices to new heights.

The industry is forced to halt production as a response but it can't go like this forever. Otherwise, Europe would be de-industrialized and its basic metals supply would have to rely on imports. However, its primary source, Asia, has increased carbon footprints from 20%-25% in 2020 to 40% in 2021. Halleman said Europe is strict about carbon emission and relevant issues must be resolved. Otherwise, it will make

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## Companies Development



### Optimas Solutions Elevates Mike Tuffy and Daniel Harms to Dual-CEOs

Optimas Solutions, a global industrial manufacturer/distributor and service provider, announced the elevation of Mike Tuffy to CEO, International, and Daniel Harms to CEO, Americas. The decision to implement a dual-CEO structure evolves the organizational model established in 2020 with autonomous, yet connected, business units.

By design, this structure has brought Optimas closer to customers and suppliers and created greater community within the organization. It also better reflects the scope of Harms and Tuffy's roles and the contributions they've been making to Optimas for over a year.



### Bulten Nominated as Supplier for New EV Platform

Bulten has been nominated as a supplier of fasteners for a new global electric vehicle (EV) platform, to be produced in China. The order value is estimated at approximately SEK 155 million a year at full production.

"We are of course delighted to be delivering fasteners for a brand new EV platform intended for the global market. The nomination shows that we are a leader regarding sustainability in our industry, as this is a customer that places very high sustainability demands on its suppliers. The contract is also positive for our operation in China, as the majority of production will take place in our factory in Tianjin," says Anders Nyström, President and CEO of Bulten.

Serial deliveries are expected to begin in the second quarter of 2024 and to reach full capacity during 2025. The new EV platform has an anticipated life cycle of seven years.



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## BUMAX Provides University Flow Test Rig with Corrosion Resistant Fastener Solution



The Technische Universität Darmstadt has selected BUMAX screws for its annular gap flow test rig to ensure high-strength and corrosion resistance for critical fasteners.

BUMAX® 109 fasteners were selected as they provide excellent corrosion resistance and high strength in the most demanding of applications.

“The BUMAX fasteners will be used to hold the sample of our annular gap flow test rig and they will be constantly immersed in water,” explains Dr. Ing. Maximilian Kuhr, Chair of Fluid Systems at the Technische Universität Darmstadt, Germany. “The high strength and excellent corrosion resistance of BUMAX screws make them ideal for our requirements.”

“We previously used zinc-laminated 12.9 steel screws, but these quickly corroded and had to be regularly replaced as they were constantly immersed in water,” says Kuhr. “Besides excellent corrosion resistance, we switched to BUMAX because we also require high strength to ensure that the test specimen stays in place even at the highest pressure differences in our test rig.”

BUMAX® 109 outperforms standard fasteners in terms of yield strength, corrosion resistance, mechanical properties and magnetic permeability. These enhanced properties are achieved through a higher molybdenum content (minimum 2.5%), unique BUMAX manufacturing processes and the sourcing of highest quality European raw materials.

## TR Shines a Spotlight on Its New Interactive 3D Animations



TR Fastenings Ltd (TR), part of the Trifast plc group, has launched new interactive 3D animations which help to make its products and installation methods easier to understand for buyers and design engineers, as well as being a beneficial training and educational tool. These real-time technical animations expertly demonstrate products, processes and concepts, which can often be complex and hard to visualise.

There is growing worldwide demand for more interactive content, specifically within the fasteners industry which TR is fully embracing and taking advantage of with its animation know-how. It's fast evolving especially with Virtual (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) starting to disrupt industrial design and engineering. With the advent of emerging technologies, manufacturing has become more complex, so the integration of VR and AR is enabling manufacturers to simplify these processes.

There are currently around 50 products with the 3D product visualiser available on the TR website. The plan is for these to be an integral part of TR's ongoing content strategy as the industry forges ahead with offering visualisation technology to meet design engineering demands.



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## Simpson Strong-Tie Wins 2022 Pro Tool Innovation Awards

**SIMPSON**  
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Simpson Strong-Tie, the leader in engineered structural connectors and building solutions, has received two Pro Tool Innovation Awards (PTIA) — the first in the Attachments Drills/Drivers category for its Quik Drive PROHSD75 Wood-to-Steel solution and the second in the Metal Screws category for its Strong-Drive TF Wood-to-Steel screws. The awards are judged by a diverse panel of professional tradespeople as well as media sponsor judges (all of whom make up a team with decades of experience handling, operating and/or testing hundreds of tools, accessories and fasteners each year).

The Quik Drive PROHSD75 Wood-to-Steel solution is a fast, reliable, and ergonomic fastening system for wood-to-steel applications. It is designed to boost efficiency and performance while providing the perfect combination of speed and ease for many jobs that require attaching wood to steel — from truck and trailer beds to high-paced manufacturing environments and beyond.

The Strong-Drive TF Wood-to-Steel screws are designed for performance and productivity in high-paced environments and eliminate the need to predrill, installing 26% faster than traditional predrill and hand-drive methods. Applications include wood-to-steel attachments such as on trailer floors, trailer walls, truck beds, mezzanines, nailers, and trimmers for steel buildings.



## Bossard Shanghai Obtained AS9120B Aerospace Certificate

Bossard Shanghai has acquired a certificate AS9120B Aerospace Quality Management Systems in China, which indicates that the company can offer aerospace clients certified fastener products and service.

"I am very pleased that Bossard has obtained the AS9120B certification, which fully proves that we have the ability to provide fasteners that meet the requirements of the aerospace industry. At the same time, I am also looking forward to Bossard's more than 190 years of experience in fastening technology that brings innovative breakthroughs in this field," said Simon Law, President of Bossard China.

The safety and quality of fasteners are of paramount importance to the aerospace industry. Since entering the Chinese market in 1999, Bossard has always maintained its focus on the aerospace industry. "With the AS9120B aerospace quality management system certificate, we will support China's aerospace industry by further expanding our fastener products and services such as: locking and anti-loosening fasteners, self-clinching technology, riveting technology, self-tapping screws, fastener selection and testing services.

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## BBI President Robert Hsieh: Competitiveness in Supply Chains Should be Improved Through Increasing Value

In order to deal with the lack of land and labor force, some Taiwanese companies have recently put much of their attention to cost reduction as their priority and long-term corporate development goal rather than increasing the value of their products and brands in the market, which is in fact the most important part. Noticing this phenomenon, BBI President Robert Hsieh recently shared his point-of-views on the land acquisition and labor force issues faced by many Taiwanese businesses in a thematic industrial session.

Hsieh thinks that, in the development of a business, attaching importance to how to look for cheaper labor force cannot utterly help advance the competitive edge of a business on the global market. As a result, he suggests that, be it local Taiwanese businesses or others seeking opportunities in Southeast Asian countries encouraged by Taiwanese Government's "Southbound Policy," they all should set their goal on how to increase the value of their products and brands and make the most of possible approaches to strengthen marketing and expand their market presence rather than continuously seeking lower costs.

Hsieh also notes that, the total production value of industrial and construction products of local Taiwanese manufacturers is around NT\$ 3,000 billion. If these manufacturers can be active in increasing their value (increasing their production value by 2.5%, for example), it won't be hard for them to try to increase the wages of all employees within the industry by at least 20%.



## EV Market in High Gear is Expected to Drive up Demand for Boltun's Fasteners

The U.S. and China are going at full steam on pushing EV development and have rolled out multiple subsidies. EU has approved forbidding carmakers to sell fuel cars starting from 2035. These factors motivate carmakers to roll out new energy cars and BEVs, which puts the global EV market into high gear.

Boltun has an edge in EV fastener know-how and it develops new EV clients, products and extends supply to tier 1 suppliers of battery modules and electronic control systems. It also taps into electronics screws. Therefore, Boltun expects carmakers' continuous EV development and the rise of new EV makers will continue to drive up demand for Boltun's fasteners.

To cope with the upcoming demand, Boltun will continue to expand capacity of the existing plant and has planned a new plant in Tainan City of Taiwan slated for putting into operation in 2024. Boltun grossed record-breaking NTD 7.42 billion in the first 8 months of 2022, up 11.88% from the same period last year. The full-year revenue is also expected to break records.



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## Acquisitions



## MKS Instruments Announces Closing of Atotech Acquisition

MKS Instruments, Inc., a global provider of technologies that enable advanced processes and improve productivity, announced the completion of the previously announced acquisition of Atotech Limited for approximately \$4.4 billion in cash and MKS common stock. Atotech is a global leader in process chemicals, equipment, software and services for printed circuit boards, semiconductor IC packaging, and surface finishing.

"The acquisition of Atotech positions MKS to accelerate roadmaps for future generations of advanced electronics devices," said John T.C. Lee, President and CEO of MKS. "By combining leading capabilities in lasers, optics, motion and now process chemistry, MKS is set to be a leader in the next frontier for miniaturization and complexity: Optimizing the InterconnectSM, a significant enabling point of next-generation advanced electronics. Atotech's leadership in functional and decorative surface finishing will also extend MKS' product offering for industrial applications and grow our market reach. I could not be more excited to welcome the Atotech team to the MKS family." ■

