

Industrial Products Finder

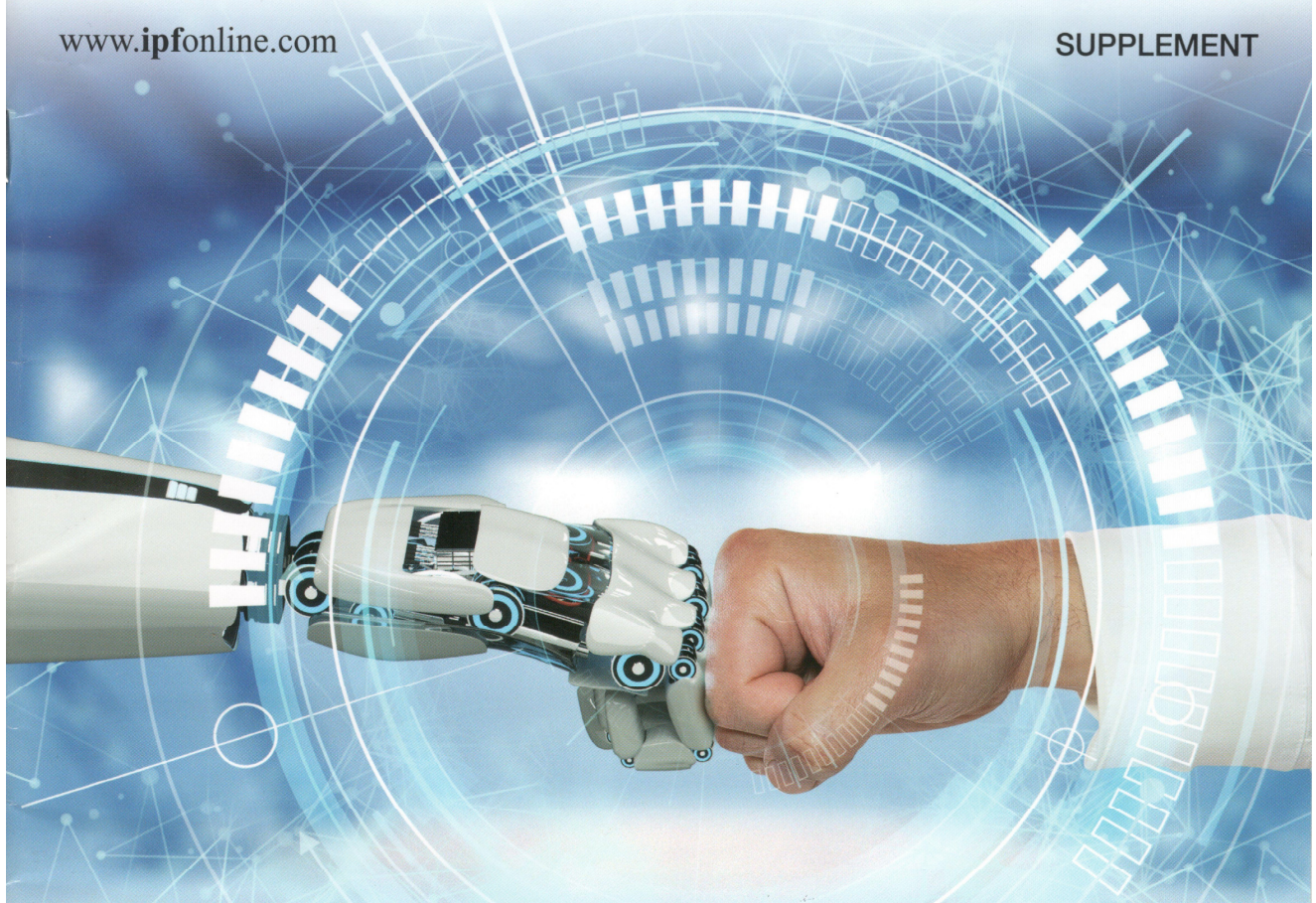
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November 2019

SMART MANUFACTURING

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“Adoption of right technology is the key for smart manufacturing”

High upfront cost of modern technologies is one of the biggest hurdles in their implementation in India. If the system is poorly designed, it will cut the profit margins, says **Kunal Banka**, Managing Director of Sharda Mercandise Pvt Ltd, who joined the family owned business 10 years back after graduating from Lancaster University UK. In this interview, he explains benefits of security seals for modern manufacturing units.

What kind of products and services are offered by your company?

We are leading and pioneer manufacturers of tamper evident, tamper resistant security seals for past three decades. We were primarily exporting our products as customers in India are price sensitive while procuring security seals. Recently, the domestic customers' perception has rapidly started to change and they are realising the importance of quality in security seals over price. For past 5 years we have started offering our security seals to domestic customers who are interested in quality security seals.

We are supplying these security seals worldwide to various industry sectors including the transport & cargo, electric, gas & water utilities, banks, couriers, petroleum, telecom, airlines, healthcare, hotels, chemicals & bulk drug, lubricants, agrochemicals, postal services, warehouses, shipping, customs etc.

How is Sharda Mercandise aiding customers in enhancing productivity?

We are manufacturing tamper evident/resistant security seals and our range of offerings is very low value products. Though we do not contribute directly to increase productivity for our customers but we are highly prevalent in saving revenue for them. We are constantly developing new range of technologically advanced security



seals that provide highest protection level and reduce the cost occurring due to pilferage, adulteration and theft during transit.

Why are seals important for ensuring product safety?

Our security seals are not directly used for manufacturing the customers' products but are used for safe transportation of their products. Our seals are used during transit to protect their products. Our customers use our security seals for securing their cargo in trucks, ships, airline, containers etc. Our security seals are used by government utilities like electricity distribution companies for protecting their electric meters from being tampered. We offer our customers global standard products since we only manufacture export quality seals.

How has security seals market evolved?

Since our inception (1989) we have placed our prime focus on innovation.

We started manufacturing security seals when nobody was aware what role exactly security seals play. Security seals were synonymous with the age old lead seals or lac seals used with the pliers. We offer a range of security seals which do not require any tool or pliers for locking. All our security seals are designed to lock by hand. Once locked, they need to be removed by cutting the seal. We are continuously upgrading our product range as well as our production process.

What types of modern technologies are you using for manufacturing?

We have modernised our manufacturing process of moulding, printing, quality checks and are utilising the technologies. For example, many of our new security seals are provided with barcode serial numbering which reduce the chances of any error while reading, recording and verifying the serial number of the seal. Our each security seals are customised with customer desired unique non-repeat security seal number. We are designing new security seals for future with complete automation using robotic production facilities. We are now using latest computerised laser machines for printing the customisations required as per customer need. Previously, traditional hot stamping foil machines were used for printing. In our manufacturing, use of new

age technologies like robotics, 3D printing, IoT etc is technically not required and also affordability cost is not feasible. However, we are upgrading our manufacturing wherever there is scope and need.

Are Indian manufacturers opting for smart manufacturing?

In terms of smart manufacturing, India has fairly good chances in comparison to developing countries. But it may take some more time to adopt as initial investment is high for setting up such manufacturing facilities. Being very large manufacturing base, it will happen gradually. There are many governing factors that need to be adapted to, before upgradation of existing manufacturing takes place in our country.

Is 'Smart Manufacturing' important for the success of Make in India?

I differ here, smart manufacturing is

not very important for success of 'Make in India'. In every production facility, 'smart manufacturing' is not possible and also not desired. In view of our population, we need to provide maximum jobs but when it comes to smart manufacturing it reduces the man power requirements. Yes, there are many products, where it is need of the hour to do smart manufacturing. In addition, adoption of right technology is the key criteria for implementing smart manufacturing.

Can SMEs also become "Smarter Manufacturing" unit?

Certainly and why not! But again it depends on the product, consumption, competition and adoption cost feasibility. Upfront cost of implementing smart manufacturing is the biggest challenge. Most of the SMEs will not be able to afford the initial technology cost. On long term, it will definitely provide savings but start

up costs need to be considered. Another hurdle is that smart manufacturing technology is complex. If the system is poorly designed, it will cut the profit margins.

Are you planning to launch any new product/solution?

We already have many products under development stage. Being innovative products, our activities all depends on market adaptability of new products. We will be soon launching RFID security seals for electric, gas and water meters. This will provide convenience to check the installed meters in customer premises. But it will primarily depend on the government policies. We are manufacturing barcoded electric meter security seals but still it has not been adopted by our electricity companies.



For more details on Sharda Mercandise, contact Kunal Banka on email: kunal@smplseals.com