

TIPS FOR ELIMINATING HIDDEN OPERATING COST IN LOW PROFILE CONVEYORS

- 1) Avoid conveyors utilizing only a drag style, high wear Vee-Guide for belt tracking. They can produce greatly reduced belt life, with dramatic increases in maintenance cost, and contamination. The majority of belt manufacturers do not recommend using vee-guiding as the sole guiding method, because of this potential reduction in belt life.

“Balanced” crowned pulley tracking systems can provide belt service life exceeding four or more years, with little wear or contamination, while providing higher load, and speed capability.
- 2) Avoid pulleys under 35mm diameter. Smaller pulleys reduce belt durability, and selection. Since bearings must normally be smaller than the pulley this can limit proper bearing sizing, and life. Smaller pulleys also require a higher R.P.M. to produce a given speed, which can reduce drive, belt, bearing, and lubrication life.
- 3) Avoid conveyors with sharp knurled pulleys. This may be an indication of insufficient belt tension, which can cause abrasion of both belt and pulley. This can also cause belt slippage due to belt fiber buildup in the knurl, requiring belt removal to clean the pulley. This routine can continue at an increasing rate until the worn knurl will no longer prevent belt slippage, at this point the pulley must be replaced. This abrasion also reduces belt life, and will increase contamination from the belt.
- 4) Some manufacturers advocating stocking of pulleys, bearings, pulley mounts, and belting, are merely confirming the “Limited” life of their perishable items outlined in sections 1), 2), and 3) that could require repeated replacement.

A major hidden cost in replacing these items on a “Routine” basis is the lost production. A simple belt change may consume three or more hours before production is restored. Replacing bearings, mounts, and pulleys could result in six to eight hours of lost production. Establishing an estimated dollar loss per hour during these periods will reveal the actual “lost production cost”. Routine replacements, with lost production costs, are unnecessary and should be avoided, in order to retain a competitive position.

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