

Airfloat

In the 1960s, an engineering group at GM experimented with the friction-free results of movement with air. Their original purpose was to move heavy loads within plant operations.

In 1967, when GM decided not to pursue the concept, David Snoeyenbos, a GM engineer, secured the rights to the technology and started Airfloat in Decatur, IL. The company focused on providing engineering solutions through air bearings technologies.

The company continued to develop the air-bearing technology and, in August 2005, Jason Stoecker, now president, bought the company.

Today, Airfloat – with 55 employees including 12 staffed engineers – manufactures air bearing and material handling products at its Decatur corporate facility. The company handles domestic and international sales through their offices in Cleveland, Detroit, Indianapolis, and Decatur.

Innovative Technology

“Airfloat applies air bearing technology and innovative design to move and position anything from a 200-ton locomotive to placing a pallet or basket of parts at

Wind Equipment

the ergonomically-correct position along an assembly line,” says Stoecker.

He says air bearings, or air casters, use compressed air to glide industrial equipment over a cushion of air, providing a cost-effective alternative to overhead cranes.

According to Stoecker, Airfloat’s technology works for a diverse range of industries including automotive, aerospace, heavy construction, heavy electrical, mobile home, pharmaceutical, and food.

Wind Industry

“While Airfloat does not address site material handling or transportation needs,” says Stoecker, “we do have a host of solutions related to handling heavy and over-sized materials for the manufacture of nacelles, towers, and blades.”

Stoecker says air-bearing technology allows for virtually friction-free movement of loads ranging from a few thousand pounds to more than one million pounds. Additionally, he says, air bearing movement allows for omnidirectional movement of these heavy loads.

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Airfloat's Six-Step Material Movement Process

Applications Development

- Finds optimum material handling solution, standard or custom-built, to maximize efficiency and safety of operation.

Custom Air Bearing Solutions

- Determines most effective parts and product movement.

Full Service Engineering

- Safety and ergonomic evaluation
- Ensures a solution that fits plant floor and facilities.

In-house Manufacturing

- 65,000-square-foot facility provides ISO 9001-2000 quality from concept to design through final air bearing product ready for factory floor.

Field Support Services

- On-going support for air bearing solutions.
- Laser system.
- Located in wind alley stretching from Texas to northern plains.

