Feature: Enclosures

Industrial cabinet modularity provides customer flexibility

By Mike Edwards

Core competency. That's what manufacturers today want to stick to – and leave the engineering of peripheral projects to those that do that kind of work every day.

Certainly industrial cabinet designs often fall into that "peripheral" category, and may not be your company's design core competency. According to Mark Saunders of Hoffman Enclosures Inc. (hoffmanonline.com), more and more manufacturing companies are looking to enclosures suppliers for their expertise.

"Our customers have a better way of dreaming"

Saunders is a customer service expert for the Hoffman Proline Modular Enclosures line of products. "Hoffman is doing more engineering work than ever now," said Saunders.

Another service of Hoffman is its Assemble-To-Order (A-T-O) program that is promoted throughout the company's website and in its Proline catalog.

The industrial enclosure program promises that ten working days is all it takes for Hoffman to assemble and ship a modular enclosure system that meets a user's specifications. Most external and internal components are available and can be installed in customer-specified positions. Items available under the program are identified the A-T-O symbol in the catalog, noted Saunders. Hoffman distributors are authorized to configure Proline A-T-O enclosures.

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DPN 3D

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The enclosures are available preconfigured for computer system applications, operator interface and double-door disconnect applications. Options allow users to select a complete system that includes the frame, sides, top, base, doors and internal mounting accessories by ordering one catalog number.

"With our large amount of accessories, our customers are doing things we never thought you could do, they have a better way of dreaming.

"Customers like the modularity for the configuration flexibility it gives them. With a unibody enclosure design, access is only through the front door," explained Saunders. "The modular Proline allows the customer to take off any of the sides, providing 360° access and visibility. Added features include the choice of panel mounting or rack mounting, as well as frames that allow expansion on the factory floor.

"Proline enclosures can be joined to any length that the customer wants them to be."

For users that prefer to receive individual Proline parts to complete the assembly themselves, frames and external components are available for shipment from the Hoffman warehouse or distributor stock. In addition, depending on the product, customers can specify modifications to Proline products.

For example, "Our layout department can provide customized features such as cutout holes and plates."

Frames in the Proline series are of a single-roll-formed, robotically welded design made of 12 gauge steel with solid steel fully welded corners. External sides and doors are 16 or 14 gauge steel, window doors are fully welded aluminum extrusions and standard door bars are said to increase strength and rigidity, and allow for an extra mounting surface.

The Proline system also accommodates operator interfaces, industrial control equipment, and computer systems, as well as manages wiring and cabling.

Gasketed assembled enclosures ratings include: UL 508A, File Number E61997: Type 12; NEMA/EEMAC Type 12; CSA File Number 42186: Type 12; VDE IP55; and, IEC 60529, IP55.

For shielding against electromagnetic an radio frequency interference, EMC assembled enclosures include ratings to: UL 508A, File Number E61997: Type 1; NEMA/EEMAC Type 1; CSA File Number 42186: Type 1; and, IEC 60529, IP30.

Patented latching system assures a solid seal with low closure force and integral frame channels support the full weight of the subpanels. Frames accommodate the 25 mm DIN standard and include rectangular holes for clip nuts and thru holes for use with threadforming screws.

Finishes depend on individual product or component descriptions.

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