

Air 'Crafted' Compressor

Compressed air is a utility (like water, power and light), and so it comes as no surprise that compressors find several uses in the field of aircraft manufacturing such as providing an uninterrupted supply of compressed air to sophisticated CNC machines. These machines need compressed air to power pneumatic arms that change tools (ATC – Automatic Tool changers) and grip the work piece (Collet Chucks). These CNC machines in turn produce various aircraft components.

Dixie Aerospace is a leader in the aircraft parts business. They have their headquarters at Peachtree City, Georgia. The company has offices and stocking locations around the world. The range of products supplied by Dixie Aerospace includes bearings, bearing tools and aircraft interiors.

The manufacture of aircraft bearings requires high precision. The bearings and other parts supplied by Dixie, being aircraft components, must meet stringent reliability requirements specified by the United States Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). This also applies to the interior components that are manufactured by Dixie. Reliability is so critical in the aerospace industry that only certified manufacturers may supply parts for installation in aircrafts. In the USA, many parts in aircraft may be replaced or modified only if the manufacturer has a Parts Manufacturer Approval (PMA), an approval granted by the FAA.

In March 2013, Dixie bought a 200,000 US\$ CNC machine for their aircraft interior plant to produce parts to tight tolerances. The CNC machine needed a reliable, dedicated source of clean and dry compressed air for their ATC and collet chuck. Dixie Aerospace chose the ELGi encapsulated screw compressor along with a refrigerant air dryer to meet the stringent aerospace quality control standards. The system was installed indoors, close to the laboratory and office. ELGi's encapsulated compressors are very compact and silent, delivering more UPTIME with high reliability. The compressor integrates major systems such as the air intake system, compression system and discharge system into a robust encapsulated machine. This simplified design results in a leak-free, reliable and energy-saving system. The compact integrated platform is also designed to run cool and efficient.

Dixie bought the compressed air system from Patton's, Inc., based in Charlotte, North Carolina. Patton's has been supplying its customers with the most efficient and reliable air compressors for over 65 years.

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