



...the Workhorse of Industry

**Smart Automation Newsletter**

**January, 2012**

# Industry Thoughts

## 15 Key Forecasts and Predictions for 2012

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Although many potential unknowns loom, experts forecast optimism for the N. American economy in 2012. The following are 15 key forecasts that may serve as a basis for your business decisions in 2012:

1. The United States will probably avoid a recession. The good news is that US domestic risks have diminished somewhat, and growth momentum has picked up modestly. Consumers seem willing to spend and businesses are more disposed to hire—albeit cautiously. This means that over the next year US growth will average between 1.5% and 2.0%. 1)
  2. Europe is headed for a second dip. All indications are that Europe will suffer through a recession in 2012—a mild one if the region’s sovereign-debt problems are resolved, or a deep one if they are not. 1)
  3. Asia will continue to outpace the rest of the world. While Asia will not be immune to a recession in Europe, growth in the region will remain resilient and will continue to be the strongest in the world (around 5.5%), for a number of reasons. 1)
  4. Commodity prices will (mostly) move sideways. During the coming year, commodity prices are likely to get pulled down by weaker global demand—and pushed up by limited excess capacity and continuing robust growth in key economies, such as China and India. 1)
  5. Inflation will diminish almost everywhere. With world growth softening and commodity prices off their peaks, inflation in every region of the world will decline in 2012. 1)
  6. With the exception of the euro, the dollar will keep sliding. Economic fundamentals alone would suggest that the dollar should keep sliding against most currencies, especially those of emerging markets. A lower dollar makes N. American products more competitive in the global market. 1)
  7. With weak output and low inflationary pressure, the Fed will keep interest rates low for an extended period of time. With gradual economic recovery, long rates will be gradually rise. 2)
  8. U.S. manufacturing industrial production growth will continue to rebound - led by the energy, transportation, and industrial equipment industries. Continuing pickup in domestic auto production will also be a major driver of overall economic growth in 2012. Firms are profitable and have the need to spend more for both traditional and high-tech business equipment. 3)
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# Industry Thoughts

## 15 Key Forecasts and Predictions for 2012 (continued)

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9. Non-high-tech manufacturing production (which accounts for 90 percent of the total) is anticipated to increase 3 percent in both 2012 and in 2013. 3)
10. Overall capital expenditures, a major driver in the U.S. economy, will increase only 1.9 percent in the manufacturing sector (Vs 11% in 2011). However, the following industries are forecasting strong capital investment in 2012: Petroleum & Coal Products; Fabricated Metal Products; Furniture & Related Products; Nonmetallic Mineral Products; Transportation Equipment; Electrical Equipment, and Appliances & Components. The overall attitude of manufacturing management is optimistic with 84 percent of survey respondents predicting 2012 will be the same as or better than 2011. 4)
11. Capital spending will maintain a strong momentum into the first part of 2012. Economic uncertainty largely fueled by election media will result in a spending slow down during the late summer. The economy and capital spending will see a favorable bounce after the elections.
12. Consumer Confidence Indexes are currently exceeding previous optimistic forecasts. Stronger than expected auto and retail sales may be indicators of a stealth recovery occurring despite the doom and gloom press. 4)
13. The presidential election will serve as a catalyst to focus on critical issues. Manufacturing in N. America will receive increasing visibility as a key factor in maintaining a sustainable US economy. The trend to relocate manufacturing back to N. America will accelerate for various reasons. Ongoing push continues to leverage technology to do more with less labor.
14. Unemployment in the US will remain persistently high - likely, not dropping below 9%. The current rate of GDP growth is insufficient to dent the huge pool of long-term unemployed. 5)
15. Barack Obama is re-elected as president in 2012 on the basis that the GOP is unable to bring forward a charismatic or electable candidate; the economy continues to show positive recovery signs; and Obama's scandal free nature. 6)

### Sources for 2012 forecasts:

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| 1) Nariman Behraves, Chief Economist, IHS            | 4) ISM Report on Business                            |
| 2) Ben Bernanke, Chairman of Federal Reserve         | 5) Goldman Sachs Outlook for the US Economy 2012     |
| 3) Daniel J. Meckstroth, Ph.D., MAPI Chief Economist | 6) Allan Lichtman, the American University professor |
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## Product Highlight:

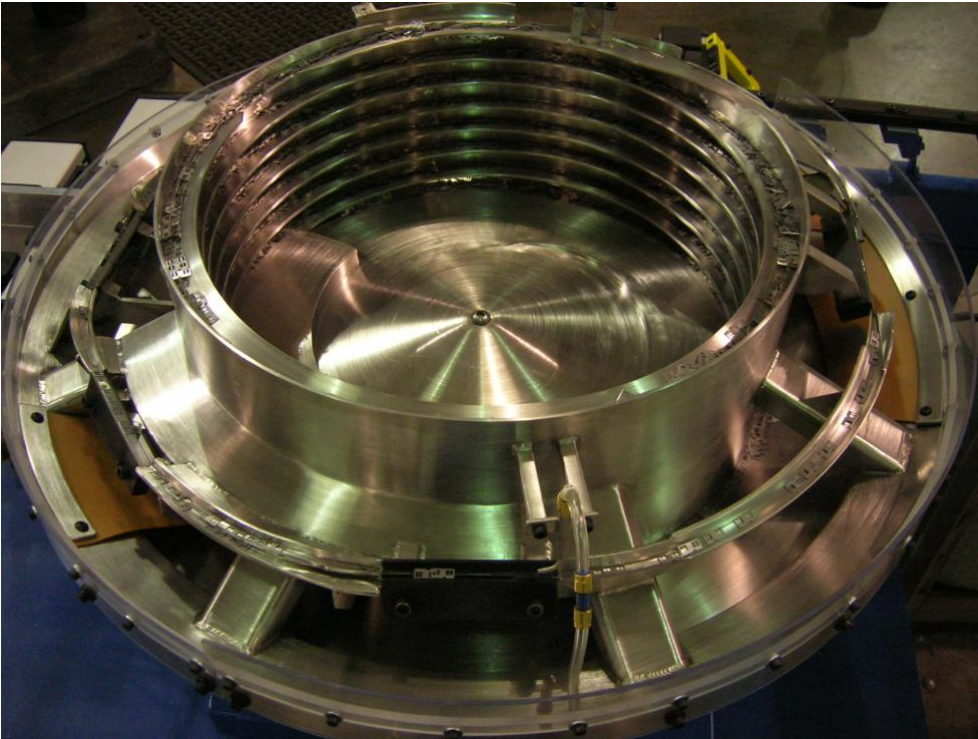
### Precision blade orientation and feeding system

**Application:** Application to feed parts requiring precision machined selection features to be integrated directly into feeder bowl to assure orientation of parts.

**Feed Rate:** 50 ppm from a single lane

#### Fortville Products:

- 18" Vibratory Feeder Bowl with precision machined tooling
- Vibratory inline track
- Base table with casters to allow ease of system movement



# Company Thoughts

## Fortville's market leadership position for large feeder bowls is no accident

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Over the years, Fortville has earned the reputation as being the market leader for large feeder bowl applications. These large feeder bowl applications are either driven by the need to achieve higher part feeding speeds for complex parts or simply the need to feed physically larger parts. Fortville's market leadership position has been achieved through superior product solutions, as well as, careful attention to the fabrication processes capable of producing these world-class, custom products. Fortville's key manufacturing processes for delivering these market leading products include the following:

- Water jet cutting of large, precision stainless steel components
- Dies and presses capable of forming the larger, key components
- Welding and assembly fixtures for precise positioning of components of the large bowls
- Polishing machines to polish the OD's of fabricated cylinders (basics) up to 42" in diameter
- Bowl positioning/ balancing fixtures capable of manipulating feeder bowls weighing over 2,000 lbs.
- Custom handling solutions to maneuver and assemble large bowls in the shop

Additionally, Fortville has developed a highly skilled team of top bowl toolers with the experience and skill sets to leverage the part feeding potential provided by large feeder bowls. Fortville's exclusive ring drive vibratory driver provides the foundation for reliably achieving the high speeds of the large bowls. Years of field experience and optimization have resulted in the production of robust systems capable of trouble free operation. In short, Fortville's market leadership position for large feeder bowls is no accident – it's the result of an ongoing pursuit and continuous improvement focus to create the world's best part feeding solutions – that's smart automation.

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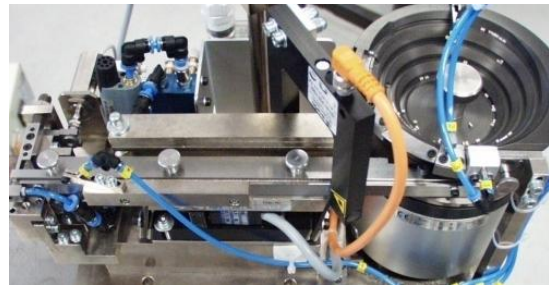
# Products and Services:

## Part Feeding Systems:



Fortville is the industry leader for part feeding solutions which range from “large and fast” to “small and precise”.

- System design and development
- System build and validation
- System remanufacture & rework
- On-site service and support
- Service part sales



## Part Feeding Components:

- **Vibratory Bowls:**
  - 4” to 70” in dia.
  - Feed rates to 850 ppm
- **Track Feeding Systems:**
  - 6” to as long as required
  - In-line Vibratory Tracks
  - In-line Air Tracks
  - Conveyor Belt Tracks
  - Gravity Tracks
- **Automation Mechanisms:**
  - Isolation Escapements
  - Shuttle mechanisms
  - Sensor integration:
    - Vision and weight
- **Storage/ Transport Systems:**
  - Elevators and Gondolas
  - Bulk Storage Hoppers
  - Sound Enclosures

See: [www.fortvillefeeders.com](http://www.fortvillefeeders.com)



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