

Michelin top rubber product firm in N.A.

Michelin North America Inc. took the title as the top rubber product maker in North America for 2012 by racking up sales of \$9.96 billion on the continent and besting Goodyear by nearly \$300 million. Michelin's sales in North America jumped 11.6 percent for 2012, according to data from the annual report of the French parent company. The continent represented 36.1 percent of Michelin's overall corporate sales last year, compared with just 33.5 percent in 2012. The company also is poised for more growth in North America through investments in future capacity. For example, its Greenville, S.C.-based Michelin unit has earmarked \$750 million for a new earthmover tire plant in Anderson, S.C., and to expand the current earthmover factory in Lexington, S.C. Michelin last held the crown as the No. 1 rubber product firm in North America in 2009, with Goodyear taking the top spot the past two years. Goodyear's sales for the region dropped 2 percent in 2012, checking in at \$9.67 billion. Its original equipment unit sales rose 12.8 percent, but replacement sales dropped 11 percent. The tire maker, however, had plenty of other good news in North America. It said its strategy to target more profitable segments was working as its full-year earnings for North America totaled \$514 million in 2012. That allowed it to surpass its goal a year early of posting \$450 million in profits for the continent by 2013, according to information in its annual report. Goodyear said its 5.3 percent profit margin for the year in North America was the first time it had hit that level in 10 years. Bridgestone Americas Inc. kept its No. 3 spot in the rankings, with estimated North American sales of \$8.1 billion in 2012. Besides tires, it makes a variety of other rubber products, including such items as air springs and rubber roofing membrane. Overall results were mixed for the year. The top 10 posted an aggregate of \$41.1 billion in sales for the region last year, up about 2.8 percent from 2011. A total of 35 of the firms posted higher North American revenues last year. For the second consecutive year, 15 firms had sales of at least \$1 billion on the continent. Rounding out the top 10 in the survey were Cooper Tire & Rubber Co., moving up one spot to No. 4 with \$3.1 billion; Continental A.G., down one spot to No. 5 with \$2.75 billion; Parker-Hannifin Corp., up one to No. 6, \$1.57 billion; New Balance Athletic Shoe Inc., which operates five U.S. factories, up four spots to No. 7 as the only newcomer to the top 10 with \$1.56 billion; Cooper-Standard Automotive Inc., steady at No. 8, at just under \$1.5 billion; Carlisle Companies Inc., remaining No. 9 with \$1.48 billion; and Yokohama Tire Corp., at No. 10 with \$1.39 billion. There were five newcomers to the list, topped by Zhongding Sealing Parts (USA) Inc. at No. 31 with \$225 million in North American sales. Besides its U.S. factories, the company purchased molded goods maker Precix Inc. at the end of 2012. Park-Ohio Holdings Corp. came in at No. 33 with estimated rubber product sales of \$222.5 million in the region. That included both its own molded goods unit and sales derived from its acquisition of hose maker Fluid Routing Solutions. Trico Products joined the rankings at No. 36 with \$177.6 million, while Q Holdings Inc. was No. 43 with \$139.5 million. The latter is the new name for

Lexington Precision Corp. and includes the combined operations of Lexington and Quality Synthetic Rubber. The final newcomer on the list is automotive parts supplier Flexible Products Inc. at No. 48 with \$94 million. Besides Fluid Routing Solutions, other names disappearing from the top 50 are Zodiac Group (No. 46 last year); Callaway Golf Co. (No. 47 a year ago); and Jasper Rubber Products Inc., which was No. 49 last year and just missed this year's cutoff. Thermoid/HBD Industries Inc. had been ranked a year ago at No. 43, but the maker of hose and belting products declined to provide data for this year's survey.

World non-tire top 50

The top 12 companies in the global ranking of the top 50 non-tire rubber product remained the same, though with the positions shuffled around a bit. Also, just three of those dozen firms posted higher sales in 2012, although two of those can be attributed to the formation of a joint venture. Continental remained the top non-tire rubber firm for a second consecutive year, but it saw its non-tire revenue drop 6.4 percent to an estimated \$4.31 billion. Hutchinson again was second with sales of \$4.07 billion, but those sales were off 2.3 percent from 2011. Bridgestone Corp. was third as its sales of \$3.77 billion allowed it to move up two spots. Tokai Rubber Industries Ltd. moved up three positions—the biggest gain among the top 12—as its revenues grew 4.7 percent to \$3.18 billion. NOK Inc. rounded out the top 5 with non-tire rubber product revenue of \$3.12 billion.

The formation of TrelleborgVibracoustic GmbH by Freudenberg Group and Trelleborg A.B. caused some changes in the standings. The new venture ranked No. 20 for the year on its own. By placing its NVH operations into the JV, Trelleborg dropped from No. 3 to No. 10 in the rankings, and Freudenberg fell two spots to No.

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