

take on those roles.

“For us, internships are the lifeblood of our leadership development program,” says Chris Lyons, global accounts manager in Omaha, NE, for Shelton, CT-based electrical distributor Gexpro. “If they come in without that experience, it can be a real crapshoot if the business is going to like you and if you’re going to like the business.” Lyons graduated from the UNK ID program in 2001.

It’s not just about hiring students, says IBT’s Hense. It’s about “injecting young talent into the company.”

Hands-On: Learning through Doing

Students in the industrial distribution program at UNK don’t just know the industry from lectures; they also receive hands-on training through the school’s simulation lab.

The creation of the lab was led by Dr. Jim Toppen, who modeled the lab after an HD Supply training branch he used to manage with a \$50,000 grant and donations from several distribution companies.

This included a Prophet 21 ERP system donated by a partner company.

“This lab is an \$800,000 operation if we had to get everything in it at market value,” Toppen says. “The only thing missing is the smell of coffee and a popcorn machine.”

Students learn everything from front counter sales to packaging and shipping to forklift

operation in the various sections of the lab. Students learn how to manage a showroom, how to stock and retrieve materials from different types of racking, how to operate conveyor systems to access mezzanine levels and even how to do take-offs.

“The best compliment we can receive is when someone walks through the front door and says ‘Wow, this really is what we do,’” Toppen says.

Faculty members – who all have experience in the industry – serve as customers, providing as many unexpected situations as possible to prepare the students for as many real-world situations as possible.

In one role play encounter, two students were faced with the challenge of explaining why there was Chinese writing on the sample part they brought with them to a firm “Buy American” customer.

“We try to make it as realistic as possible for the students,” says Greg Benson, coordinator of the UNK ID program. Benson worked in the purchasing field for about 25 years before joining the faculty at UNK.

Between the internships and the simulation lab, students learn real-world skills that they can take with them to the business world, Jochum says. And that goal is evident to the companies that hire from the program.

“The talent base here is incredible,” IBT’s Hense says.

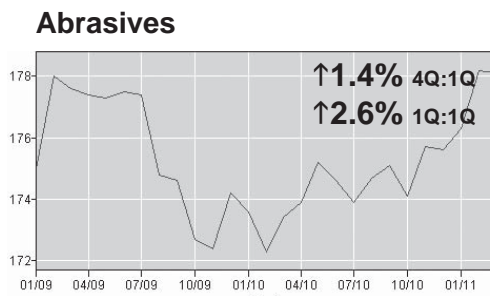
MDM Pricing Trends Report: 1Q 2011

First-quarter data for 59 product groups

Key
4Q:1Q (4Q '10 with 1Q '11)
1Q:1Q (1Q '10 with 1Q '11)

These select product groups provide a snapshot of inflation trends based on the Producer Price Index from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. This report, with graphs for each of the 59 products listed here, is available online in pdf format at www.mdm.com/inflationreport.

Industrial



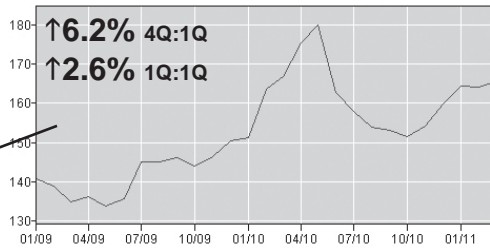
Product Group	4Q:1Q	1Q:1Q
Pumps, Compressors & Eqmt	+2.09%	+2.93%
Ind. Material Handling Eqmt	+0.47%	+1.30%
Ind. Rubber Products, nec	+2.36%	+4.36%
Ind. Safety Equipment	+0.38%	+0.58%
Metal Forming Machine Tools	+0.35%	+0.92%
Metal Valves (not fluid power)	+1.79%	+3.31%
Steel Mill Products	+7.45%	+13.40%
Adhesives & Sealants	+1.55%	+4.15%
Metal Cutting Machine Tools	+1.01%	+1.30%



Access graphs showing trends for all 59 product groups online at www.mdm.com/inflationreport.

Construction

Softwood Lumber



Jan-San, Paper and Packaging

Product Group	4Q:1Q	1Q:1Q
Specialty Cleaning, Polish, & Sanitary Products	+0.89%	-3.51%
Boxes	+0.83%	+3.87%
Label/Wrap Printing for Pkgng.	+0.36%	+1.43%
Pkging & Ind. Converting Paper	+0.88%	+6.48%
Pkging Products from Plastic	+3.24%	+5.23%
Sanitary Paper Products	+0.73%	+0.85%
Pulp and Paper	+0.70%	+5.96%

Power Transmission & Fluid Power

Product Group	4Q:1Q	1Q:1Q
Mechanical Power Trans Eqmt*	+1.57%	+3.20%
Ball & Roller Bearings	+0.28%	+2.47%
Plain Bearings & Bushings	+2.65%	+3.66%
Speed Changers/Drives/Gears	+2.02%	+3.22%
Fluid Power Equipment	+0.56%	+2.12%
Fluid Power Valves	+0.08%	+1.69%

*Category encompasses first three (PT) products below it in table.

Fasteners

Product Group	4Q:1Q	1Q:1Q
Nuts, Bolts, Scrws, Wash., etc.*	+0.07%	+2.25%
Aircraft Fasteners	-0.98%	-1.67%
Externally Threaded Fasteners**	-0.24%	4.93%
Internally Threaded Fasteners**	-1.34%	-1.77%
Nonthreaded Metal Fasteners**	+1.17%	+1.70%

*Category encompasses products in table below it.

**Excludes aircraft fasteners.

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Product Group	4Q:1Q	1Q:1Q
Plastic Construction Products	+0.52%	+2.22%
General Millwork	+0.13%	+0.99%
Gypsum Products	-0.77%	+1.77%
Hardboard, Particlebd, Fiberbd	+1.54%	+1.80%
Hardwood Lumber	-1.07%	+4.66%
Plywood	+2.17%	+3.26%
Wd Ties, Siding, Shingles, etc.	+0.27%	+4.46%

Electrical

Product Group	4Q:1Q	1Q:1Q
Electrical Machinery & Eqmt.*	+0.27%	-0.44%
Electronic Components & Accs.	-0.74%	-4.21%
Integrating/Measuring Instrumts	+0.31%	-0.12%
Motors, Generators, etc.	+2.16%	+5.25%
Wiring Devices	+1.61%	+3.15%
Transformers/Power Regulators	+1.89%	+2.99%
Switchgear, Switchbd, etc. Eqmt	+0.40%	+2.21%
Communications/Related Eqmt	+0.54%	+0.41%
Electric Lamp Bulbs and Parts	+0.50%	+0.30%

*Category encompasses all products below it in table.

Tools

Product Group	4Q:1Q	1Q:1Q
Cutting Tools & Accessories*	+1.03%	+3.46%
Hand & Edge Tools	+0.22%	-0.18%
Power-Driven Hand Tools	+0.11%	+0.55%
Precision Measuring Tools	+0.00%	+2.81%
Small Cutting Tools	+1.62%	+4.56%
Tools, Dies, Jigs, Molds, Fixtures	+0.93%	+1.45%

*Category encompasses all products shown below it in table.

Hardware, HVACR/Plumb, Gases, Plastics

Product Group	4Q:1Q	1Q:1Q
Hardware*	+0.60%	+1.02%
Builders Hardware	+1.61%	+3.15%
Air Cond. & Refrigeration Eqmt	+1.46%	+2.47%
Heating Eqmt	+0.85%	+2.12%
Plumbing Fixtures & Fittings	+0.82%	+1.61%
Industrial Gases	-0.07%	+3.47%
Welding Machinery & Eqmt	+1.22%	+3.37%
Plastic Resins & Materials	+4.11%	+9.19%
Plastic Products (overall)	+1.75%	+3.98%

*Category includes Builders Hardware.