

History of Success

DICA is setting the standard in the outrigger pad and crane mat industry through product innovation.

BY BRIAN SALGADO

Like countless other family-owned and operated businesses, DICA was founded by one person who wanted to provide a solution that made something better and helped others.

“In our case, it was our dad, and like a lot of hard-working and industrious people, he knew he could build a better mousetrap and was willing to bet on it by starting a company,” DICA CEO Kris Koberg says. “From that simple beginning, things gradually became more complex.”

DICA was founded in the late 1980s by Dick Koberg who at the time worked for a fiberglass company that serviced electrical utility customers. When discussing the benefits of fiberglass for truck bodies with a fleet manager, Mr. Koberg was asked, “Can you build me a better outrigger pad?”

Mr. Koberg came up with the idea to encase wood outrigger pads in fiberglass in order to increase the strength and make them waterproof. His idea worked, and the DICA concept was launched to find a way to make the existing product better.

“This early spirit of innovation has been fundamental throughout our history and is what continues to drive our product design today,” Kris Koberg says.

Today, DICA’s most successful product is its engineered thermoplastic Safety Tech® outrigger pads. Safety Tech outrigger pads are an ideal replacement for wood outrigger pads because of their strength, durability, rigidity, ease of use and extreme resistance to breaking, cracking, and moisture absorption.

“This is the product that put DICA on the map,” Kris Koberg says. “Our SafetyTech Outrigger pads can be used to support all types of stabilizer or outrigger enabled equipment, including smaller to mid-size cranes in the energy sector. They’re so reliable, we back them with a, ‘If you can break it, we’ll replace it’ guarantee.”

Latest Offerings

In 2014, DICA introduced three new products that have great potential for the energy industry, which relies heavily on mobile cranes. FiberMax® crane mats, FiberMax crane pads and the



new ZeroLift outrigger pad rack.

“FiberMax crane mats are revolutionary products that provide greater longevity than hardwood crane mats, decrease operational costs and allow cranes of all sizes to safely operate in all types of environments (dry, wet, cold, hot), and soil bearing capacities,” Koberg says. “FiberMax crane mats deliver a trifecta of benefits with decreased transportation costs, a very long lifespan and engineered material properties for consistent and predictable performance.”

FiberMax crane mats and outrigger pads are designed and constructed utilizing fiber-reinforced polymer technology that allows us to create mats that are strong and rigid like steel and wood but, in many cases, weigh 50 percent less than typical steel or wood mats and have a projected lifespan of 20 years. Because of their high compressive strength and flexural rigidity, FiberMax crane mats distribute concentrated loads over large areas to safely reduce ground-bearing pressure that is critical when



DICA Safety Tech® Outrigger Pads supported a 75-ton truck crane at Kennedy Space Center, which was hoisting drive wheels for a NASA crawler-transporter. Safety Tech outrigger pads are an ideal replacement for wood outrigger pads because of their strength, rigidity and ease of use.

is there is typically not a place to easily or safely store outrigger pads,” Koberg says. “RT cranes are fantastic pieces of equipment.

“Unfortunately, outrigger pad storage is a challenge on these units,”

Koberg adds. “Generally, outrigger pads are stored on the deck of cranes that can be more than 5 feet off the ground.

This puts RT crane operators in a tough position, and their employers at a higher risk of an OSHA-reportable accident and an increased EMR rating.”

Because of this, operators are faced with several undesirable and potentially hazardous options. In some cases they may not use outrigger pads to avoid having to lift them high onto the deck, or they may use a secondary piece of equipment like a forklift to maneuver the pads on the job site, or they have to manually carry pads that can weigh over 100 pounds. The combination of the ZeroLift outrigger pad rack and DICA round SafetyTech outrigger pads addresses all of these challenges. The ZeroLift rack stores the pads at waist level, or below, and allows for the pads to be slid on and off, significantly reducing any lifting needed. The round DICA SafetyTech outrigger pads can be rolled easily to the correct position.

“Using ZeroLift, operators can simply slide the outrigger pads off and roll them into position,” Koberg says. “An added benefit is reduced setup and breakdown times, which reduces operational costs.”

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—Kris Koberg, CEO

creating foundational stability.

FiberMax crane pads are different from FiberMax crane mats in construction and use. The FiberMax crane pads are constructed of the same fiber reinforced materials, but are constructed as solid layers of laminate. These crane pads are designed

for smaller to medium size equipment requiring a strong and exceptionally rigid pad.

Safety Reigns

The ZeroLift Pad Rack is DICA’s newest product launch. It’s a rough terrain crane accessory that provides safe lifting and stor-

age benefits for RT crane operators. The ZeroLift Pad Rack weighs just 60 pounds and has a carrying capacity of 1,000 pounds. It is adjustable to fit pad sizes up to 48 to 60 inches and can be installed on the front or back of nearly every RT crane.

“The challenge with RT cranes

“We don’t cut corners and use only the best materials, product design and manufacturing processes. We want to provide the highest performing products that deliver the best value for our customers.”

—Kris Koberg, CEO

Despite expanding with new product offerings in 2014, DICA remains committed to doing just a few things very well, according to Koberg.

“Beginning with our first outrigger pads, we’ve emphasized the simplest design possible that’s user friendly, aesthetically pleasing, and something we would want to use ourselves,” Koberg adds. “We don’t cut corners and use only the best materials, product design and manufacturing

processes.

“We want to provide the highest performing products that deliver the best value for our customers,” Koberg says.

Oftentimes products need to be customized to meet customers’ unique needs.

“Whether it’s creating a custom solution for NASA or fitting a 50-, 100-, 250- or 400-ton crane in unique metro environments, or where soil bearing pressures are as low as 1,000 PSF, we take

great pride in creating solutions our customers need,” Koberg says. “We also support end-user markets through association memberships, conferences presentations, trade show exhibition, monthly newsletters, and working with other people and organizations who are committed to achieving the highest possible levels of safety in their industry.

“For our customers, we make a safety product, and our No. 1 goal is that operators using our products

can go home at night the same way they showed up at work in the morning,” Koberg continues. “That also extends to our employees – we seek to provide a safe work environment while helping our people grow personally, professionally and financially.

“By doing those things really well, thousands of customers in more than 20 countries and on six continents have become longstanding supporters of DICA.” ☺





Above: Introduced in 2014, the ZeroLift Pad Rack easily installs on RT cranes.

Below: FiberMax Mega Duty crane mats are strong and rigid like steel but, in many cases, weigh 50 percent less than typical steel or wood mats.

