



Hovercraft technology systems can increase factory efficiency and productivity

Hovercraft technology is seeing plenty of use in mainstream manufacturing. Manufacturing equipment, as well as the components of whatever is being put together, can weigh thousands of pounds but need to be moved with smooth efficiency during the production cycle. In manufacturing situations, hovercraft technology, in the form of air bearings or air casters, is a game changer.

Manufacturers have realized that floating equipment and components on air provides benefits in terms of efficiency and accuracy of movement, and puts less physical and mental stress on an assembly team. Think of this kind of hovercraft like an air hockey puck. Instead of a team of people moving a giant machine on a wheeled cart using all of their strength, hovercraft technology can lift a machine off the ground using compressed air. Then, because the load is floating like an air hockey puck, it can be guided by hand with no more physical strength than it takes to push a shopping cart. Floated loads are lower friction than alternatives like wheels or a belt, so it requires less force to move and also enables better control for more accuracy of motion.

Hovercraft also save space within a facility, because they are compact and low-profile. Instead of increasing the height of a load by the height of a wheel, a hovercraft caster is low profile. It can slide flat underneath the load, inflate, and then move, so there is no need for lifting the load to place it on a cart, nor for space to accommodate the turning radius of a forklift or crane.

Air bearings also protect floor surfaces in a facility. Wheels, forklifts and cranes can tear up the epoxy of a floor, which is meant to stay as smooth as possible to facilitate movement and maintain safety. Moving heavy loads by floating on air instead of wheels saves on floor maintenance and decreases downtime that would be needed for that maintenance.

Just like cars with wheels are expected to eventually be replaced with hovercrafts, crane, forklift and wheel-based load moving solutions are likely to be outpaced by hovercraft technology for factory use. It not only saves time and effort, leading to higher efficiency and productivity, but it keeps the machine and the people moving it safer. See hovercraft technology in manufacturing [here](#). For more information, [contact AeroGo](#).

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