

## Q1

As of July 2024, most of the fasteners imported by U.S. fastener distributors came from “Taiwan, China, Japan, Canada, and Germany”, and the estimate for the whole year should be similar. Based on your knowledge, what are the main industrial applications that are currently generating most of the demand for fasteners in the U.S.? Do you think there are any special considerations that U.S. buyers should be aware of when purchasing fasteners from these sources?

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The primary industrial applications in the US continue to be automotive, heavy truck, construction, agriculture, recreational vehicle, and power generation. Some markets have strengthened while others such as automotive and agriculture are slightly weaker currently. The push to have more electric vehicles will shift the types of fasteners being used, but they are still very necessary. It is not news to your readers but almost everything requires fasteners from the chair I am sitting in right now, to the car I drove today, to the doors and windows in my house. I am constantly amazed at our industry. Lead times and freight costs are still very important drivers but service, quality, and relationships are the most important aspects when choosing and buying from a manufacturer or supplier. The potential labor strikes with some US ports could put additional time and cost for customers when importing material from Asia or Europe.

## Interview with NFDA President Scott McDaniel

## Q2

(Following question 1) Do you have any suggestions for these suppliers' products and services to make the cooperation closer and smoother? And what other fastener applications do you think these suppliers could also strengthen their production for?

I believe we are in a period of major technological change with Artificial Intelligence (AI) and it will be exciting and a little scary to see how it develops. Using AI will enable faster communication and new solutions to existing problems and challenges. Having answers to problems faster and identifying issues before they occur could help all of us. AI could also help design new fasteners that are lighter, stronger, and cheaper for some applications. There is nothing so constant as change. Everything must change to grow. So, we welcome change because... Change = Opportunity = Growth

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## Q3

At present, the situations in certain regions around the world are still unpredictable, and the issue of “requiring suppliers to have extra factories overseas” arising from geopolitical factors has been particularly the talk of the town in the past few months. To your knowledge, have you heard about this request from U.S. companies or association members? What do you think about this issue?

It is not a new issue and supply chain flexibility will continue to be a focus for companies around the world. Depending on the parts and the application, contingency plans are always a good idea especially in the event of a natural disaster such as an earthquake or cyclone. My hope is that there will not be a need for the contingency plans.



## Q4

We see that some Taiwanese and Chinese fastener manufacturers have recently set up or are considering setting up overseas factories in Vietnam, Thailand or other emerging countries, do you think this will give them an advantage in cooperating with U.S. customers in the future? What advice do you have for them?

I think it is a good idea to continue to expand the manufacturing capabilities into other countries as they become more industrialized. Vietnam, Thailand, and Malaysia have excellent opportunities for growth in fasteners as well as other manufacturing areas. I also think of India which has a massive population and good manufacturing but much of that capacity is needed to build components and products for their own country so exporting fasteners and other goods can be challenging but still possible.

## Q5

Can you tell us about the recent trends and your observations related to the major fastener markets in the U.S.?

The last few years have put a much bigger focus on product availability and service and less of a focus on cost savings. I believe that is changing, and there will be a greater focus on driving cost efficiencies and cost reductions while maintaining quality and service.

## Q6

The Fastener Distributor Index (FDI) for August has been released, how do you interpret the change in the index data?

The 53.8 FDI number is the highest level in the past 12 months and is the first increase since May. August is traditionally a good sales month as the summer vacation and holiday season in the US is over and everyone is back to work. With the Presidential election coming in November and the continued impacts of inflation and high interest rates, there is uncertainty for many companies. Some companies have paused investments until new leadership is elected and hopefully more business friendly guidelines are in place.

## Q7

What role do you think NFDA can play in the current changes in the U.S. fastener market?

The NFDA has a long history of outstanding leaders and industry experts. It is truly an honor to be associated with so many wonderful people. I would like to help improve discussions with all the fastener distributor associations in Asia, Europe, and the Americas to improve communications and collaboration. The NFDA is working hard to provide great value in the areas of training, networking, and best practices.

## Q8

What quarterly meetings and events has NFDA planned for the new year?

We had our Executive Summit in San Diego California in October 2024. Our Holiday Party will be held in December which is always a fun event. In June 2025, we will meet in Charlotte, North Carolina for our Annual meeting. In addition to those events, we hold online training classes, mentorship opportunities, and even a book club led by the Young Fastener Professionals (YFP). We want to continue to provide opportunities to our current and future members.

## Q9

Have you achieved any goals or accomplishments (including international exchanges) since you took over the presidency?

I became President of the NFDA at our June Annual meeting and was given the honor of presenting the Fastener Professional of the Year award to Marc Strandquist's family. Marc was a former President of the NFDA as was a huge supporter of the NFDA and the entire fastener industry. Marc was a mentor of mine, and I was blessed to have the opportunity to learn many valuable lessons from him.

## Q10

What are your expectations for the global fastener industry in 2025?

I expect to see moderate growth in 2025 and even greater growth in the following years. It is an exciting time for our industry and I look forward to what lies ahead. Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts with you and your readers.

