Copyright CSC Publishing

How can we determine whether it's more practical to buy a new mixer or rebuild our old one?

irst, make sure the technology you're using is state-of-the-art. Mixer efficiencies have improved extensively over the past few years and new technologies have been established and implemented. Depending on how old your existing mixer is, your process could be improved simply by combining process steps or by adding a new technology. It's also important to ensure that your existing mixer is as energy-efficient as possible. Second, you should discuss your options with mixer suppliers and compare the costs of investing in a new mixer against the costs of rebuilding your existing mixer. Experienced mixer suppliers will help you determine the best solution for your application, even if the supplier didn't manufacture your original mixer or the new mixers you're considering.

Dagmar Huep, CFO, AVA-HUEP, +49-(0)-8152-9392-0

a new mixer can be a very complex decision and many different factors must be evaluated. For example, a 20-year-old

mixer with no damage that's expected to continue being used for the same application with the same components would likely be more cost-effective to refurbish. However, if the existing mixer has structural damage, a history of gearbox repair, or needs some design changes such as increased material capacity or a change in agitator speed, then installing a new mixer would probably be more cost effective.

etermining if it's practical to refur-

bish an existing mixer or to purchase

There are many conditions and variables

that you need to evaluate to determine the most cost-effective option. You should consider the following:

- · Current application versus future applications
- The cost of a new mixer versus the cost of refurbishing an existing mixer
- Installation downtime for a new mixer versus the length of production downtime for a refurbishment
- · Location, size, and mobility of surrounding equipment
- · Amortization of investment in the existing mixer

In addition, there are other factors that aren't as easy to evaluate, including future-oriented thinking such as preparation for changing markets, the availability of funds, the prominence of the mixer for customer viewing, diversification versus competition considerations, closing an existing gap in your current range, and the need for any technical upgrades or quality improvements.

After gathering this data, you should have a better idea of the more cost-effective and practical choice for your needs.

> Gisbert Ischen, MAP div. sales manager, WAM, 817-232-2678

What factors should I consider when selecting a discharge for my mixer?

onsider the following factors when choosing a discharge for your mixer:

- The amount of mixed material remaining in the vessel after discharge. For high-precision mixing, this amount should be minimized.
- The mixed material's viscosity. Smoothly discharging high-viscosity material is difficult because it sticks to the vessel and discharge. Choose the appropriate discharge for your material.
- The blend discharging time. For high-output applications, the shorter the time, the better.
- The cleanability of the vessel and discharge. For high-output applications and to allow easy maintenance, the easier to clean, the better.
- The automation of the mixer. If your process is automated, the discharge must be appropriate for automation.

Masaru Izawa, sales engineer, Conair Kawata Sales and Service. 814-758-4861

Equipment suppliers are a valuable source of information about equipment and processes. In light of this, we occasionally ask suppliers a question of concern to our readers. Answers reflect the suppliers' general expertise and don't promote the suppliers' equipment. If you have a question you'd like suppliers to answer, send it to Alicia Tyznik, Associate Editor, Powder and Bulk Engineering, 1155 Northland Drive, St. Paul, MN 55120; fax 651-287-5650 (atyznik@cscpub.com).