
Worthington Industries to expand auto and housing business

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Bloomberg reported that Worthington Industries Inc plans to expand in India and China to tap faster growth in auto and housing markets.

Mr John P McConnell CEO of Worthington Industries said that "We need to be focused more internationally in these emerging markets than we have been in the past. I hope that we grow it fairly rapidly."

He said that Worthington already exports to China such steel products as gas cylinders and precision auto parts and the company is exploring joint ventures in the country.

Mr McConnell said that Worthington opened a JV plant in India this year that makes suspended ceiling systems and the company currently sells steel framing products to mid rise hotel chains. The company's cylinder unit, which makes containers for pressurized gases, is looking for expansion opportunities in India and Brazil.

He said that hot rolled steel prices in the US may continue to fall from the low USD 600 per tonne level before rising to the high USD 600 level. The worst is over for domestic steel markets and the US economy.

Mr McConnell added that weak US housing and construction markets prompted Worthington to shut about half its 27 metal framing plants, and only one third have the potential to re open as the company consolidates production to boost profitability.

(Sourced from www.bloomberg.net)

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