

Koen Lauryssen,
Head of Operations at EPTDA



– A Future Outlook from the **EPTDA**

+ + + + +

As the most important power transmission distributors organization for the EMEA region, the EPTDA has adapted promptly to the ongoing global changes and is ready to embrace new challenges, in order to support its member companies. This candid interview with Mr. Koen Lauryssen, Operations Manager at EPTDA, provides a fresh perspective concerning the current situation, ongoing projects and future outlook of the EPTDA towards the Power Transmission Industry.



Can you tell us more about your background and current activities at EPTDA?

I was a qualified lawyer practicing Finance, Corporate, and NonProfit Association Law for 15 years. From time to time, I acted as legal advisor to EPTDA on NonProfit Association Law, Management, and Governance. However, in January 2021, I on-boarded the EPTDA Bureau team as their Head of Operations. So far, the experience is very fulfilling, giving me opportunities to broaden my horizons. I always found EPTDA's purpose, activities, the Pan-European operation, and the general atmosphere very upright and contributory. Hence, when I got this golden opportunity to join this organization, I did not hesitate for a second and hopped in right away.

Will the traditional EPTDA programs and the annual convention, as we know them, return in 2022?

Absolutely yes ! The world is gradually getting back to normal, and so are we. We host the EPTDA Annual Convention in Warsaw, from 16 - 18 March 2022. Nonetheless, if one thing that the pandemic has taught us, is it 'You never know,' hence, be prepared for the unknown. But in an ideal and abiding situation, we do plan to host a physical convention for our members at the earliest.

During the pandemic, we organized multiple virtual events to stay connected with our members while providing them with actionable information to deal better with the situation. Quite frankly, the virtual-fatigue has reached the optimum now. EPTDA members seek real human interaction, and the bureau agrees that it is high time we indulge in our regular events like Annual Convention, Leadership Meetings, and Industry Fair.

Can we expect any new EPTDA initiatives and programs in the post pandemic era? If so, what will be different?

My philosophy says, "Don't change for the sake of it.


Change because you mean it and you believe in it". As new Head of Operations of this association, I aim to mature the existing initiatives to further champion the EMEA PT/MC industry.

To name a few: More than ever meaningful experience sharing and networking opportunities during and after the Annual Business Convention and other live events. Supporting and generating ideas to encourage further actionable usage of our high quality Economic forecasting reports and Product life intelligence (PLI) reports to foster a better understanding of local markets regarding production, process, and facilities. Rendering strategic data and details via our monthly PTMIndex publication, an exclusive report for EPTDA members, along with offering quality real-time industrial data available on European short-cycle industrial demand.

I enthusiastically share, we strategically leveraged the Zoom era for structuring one-on-one sessions with individual members to receive their propositions on adding value and potential to the EPTDA community. The response and participation received were extraordinary. We characterized some highly serviceable and practical initiatives based on these virtual roundtables like EPTDA Leadership Academy, Member News - a privileged broadcasting space for EPTDA members on the EPTDA Website, and interactive EPTDA newsletters. Unlike the past, in this newly transformed post-COVID era, we will rely on hybrid models of communication and networking - the digital will share the due weightage with physical.

Do you expect any practical or habitual changes at the personal level within the member companies? If so, would this force structural changes to EPTDA programs?

One thing has not changed : our members devoted support to the association. Even though times were often unpredictable and challenging for each of them, a huge majority of our members stayed on board despite the absence of an Annual Business

A professional portrait of Koen Lauryssen, a middle-aged man with short brown hair and a slight smile. He is wearing a dark blue blazer over a light blue and white striped button-down shirt. His arms are crossed, and he is leaning against a white wall. The background is a bright, out-of-focus interior space.

Koen Lauryssen,
Head of Operations at EPTDA



Convention in 2021. In addition, despite lack of physical meetings our volunteers were more motivated than ever to take up their active role in the different Committees and Board. I would like to express my gratitude to all of them for that!

Further, every industry has gone through a massive overhaul. Agreeably, the daily traffic jams will resume, but specific changes are here to stay. The Work-for-home is a groundbreaking concept that had a general breakthrough across industries. Many of our members are now embracing the hybrid model with enthusiasm. By all means, the association will also need to adapt its operations accordingly. Hence, the critical challenge at the moment for us is to continue engaging members of all ages - those who are digital-friendly and those who insist on physical meetings.

Must I add, the era of physical presence for every other meeting and conference is beyond passe.

During the COVID-19 crisis, what role did the EPTDA play in supporting its member companies? How does the EPTDA continue to support member companies today?

2020 was the year of webinars, video conferences, and adapting to new ways of communication. Unfortunately, the situation, although better, continues in 2021. It was certainly challenging for EPTDA to adopt these new techniques of doing business. Still, we did, and successfully at that; barring some sundry hits and trials. We left no stone unturned to ensure active communication with our members while guiding them on effective tackling of the pandemic while safeguarding their people and profits. Of course, we took every measure to ensure the health and well-being of all our representatives.

Meanwhile, we are encouraging our member companies to embrace digitalisation with all guns blazing. In 2021, we launched EPTDA Leadership Academy - A 1-year digital training program for aspiring leaders irrespective of their age, role, and experience. Of course, I can't repeat it enough: everyone is looking forward to the next live meeting.

What remaining challenges, if any, do member manufacturer and distributor companies need to overcome?

The general anticipation was that of a prolonged economic recession.

Interestingly, what we have is a super-fast recovery. Hence, the manufacturers and distributors need to up their supply chain and logistics game. Short

supply of raw material, plunging inventories, rising energy prices, and fast-paced digitalisation are a few prominent prevailing challenges.

However, this doesn't end there. Policy upheavals is another aspect our member companies mustn't ignore. Let's just discuss the Green Deal here as example - for sure, this is going to have an impact on the PT/MC industry. However, such challenges are more of an opportunity. At EPTDA, we keep our members updated on major trends and opportunities and their practical consequences on the industry.

Our PTMI Index is uniquely curated keeping this requirement in focus - I am 100% convinced members referring and consulting this index could pick up many economic trends and challenges in advance, such as these widespread shortages. Of course, prior information helps you with preparation, doesn't it?

How do you see the future of the power transmission and motion control industries in the years ahead?

In one word: BRIGHT. PT/MC is a core industry that has an irreplaceable role in the economic framework. Let's not forget that the PT/MC is the industry that technically put things in motion - We are the nuts and bolts and the gearboxes of the economy. Of course, the industry can't continue playing the age-old tunes; it must embrace the technological wave. Simultaneously aspects like sustainability and conscious carbon footprint reduction are critical dimensions.

All said and done, EPTDA members are already bracing up to meet this new set of trends and challenges. I say this with conviction, PT/MC industry in Europe is re-shaping its purpose and vision fast. Rest assured, the industry will contribute significantly to the impending transformation of Europe towards sustainable growth.

About EPTDA

EPTDA is the leading association for industrial distribution distributors and manufacturers across Europe, the Middle East & Africa, setting the highest commercial, environmental, social and ethical standards. Its mission is to advance distribution and strengthen members to be successful, profitable and competitive in a changing market environment. EPTDA vision is to be the leading community in the EMEA region for industrial distribution, as recognized by customers. EPTDA currently has a membership of more than 243 leading companies across 34 countries worldwide, working with some 320,000 employees and representing over €22 billion in annual revenues.