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Our businesses are not seasonal. However, sales to our OE manufacturing (OEMs) customers are closely related to their production schedules and historically those schedules have been strongest in the first two quarters of the year.

Backlog

Generally, our products are not on a backlog status. They are produced from readily available materials and have a relatively short manufacturing cycle. Each operating unit maintains its own inventories and production schedules and some of our products are available from more than one facility.

Competition

Within each of our continuing operating segments, we compete with a variety of independent suppliers and distributors, as well as the in-house operations of certain OEMs. We compete primarily on the basis of product quality, technology, cost, delivery and service.

A summary by operating segment is set forth below:

Automotive Systems Group — We are one of the primary independent suppliers in torque and traction technologies (axles, driveshafts, and drivelines), structural solutions (frames) and system integration technologies (including advanced modularity concepts and systems). Our primary competitors include American Axle, in-house operations of DaimlerChrysler, GKN, Magna, Tower Automotive, ThyssenKrupp, Visteon and ZF Group.

Engine and Fluid Management Group — We are one of the leading independent suppliers of sealing systems (gaskets and cam covers), thermal management (thermal acoustical shields, heat exchangers, and small radiators), fluid transfer (fuel rails, brake lines and HVAC routing) and power products (piston rings and engine bearings). On a global basis, our primary competitors in sealing systems are ElringKlinger, Federal Mogul and Freudenberg NOK. Competitors in thermal management include Behr, Delphi, Modine and Valeo. On the fluid transfer side of the business, we compete against companies such as Delphi, Eaton, Valeo and Visteon. Primary competitors on the power products side of the business include Federal Mogul and Mahle.

Heavy Vehicle Technologies and Systems Group — We are one of the primary independent suppliers of axles, driveshafts and brakes for both the medium and heavy truck markets, as well as various off-highway segments. With regard to the off-highway markets specifically, we also specialize in the manufacturing of transmissions. Our primary competition in North America includes ArvinMeritor in the heavy and medium markets and Hendrickson in the trailer market. Other major competitors in Europe include OEM vertically integrated operations in the heavy truck markets, as well as Carraro, ZF Group and OEM vertically integrated operations in the off-highway markets.

Patents and Trademarks

Our proprietary drivetrain, engine parts, chassis, structural components, fluid power systems and industrial power transmission product lines have strong identities in the markets we serve. Throughout