

## Consistent Metric Thread Designation Can Eliminate Confusion and Reduce Supplier Errors

Globalization continues to expand on an ever-growing scale. This raises the awareness of suppliers to product differences in designation, processes and design practices. Different nomenclature used to designate the same products in different parts of the world results in supplier errors resulting from purchaser-supplier misunderstandings.

Products are being designed using a wide range of standards which are no longer limited to a small selection as in the past. This change has required suppliers to become more versed in global standards and to be more cautious when preparing product quotes and processing orders. The clear definition of products and their respective requirements has become more critical than ever.

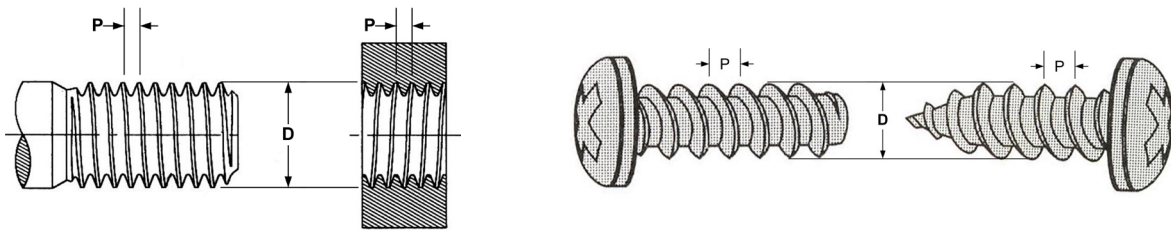
Some of the national and international standards do not require the product to be designated as completely as others. When viewed in their respective parts of the world these differences carry little risk but, as global trade expands these differences sometimes result in the wrong product being quoted and/or supplied to the purchaser.

Fastener manufacturers that supply both inch and metric threaded fasteners find the challenge even greater. The biggest issue is the inconsistent way in which thread sizes are designated. Following is the thread size designation practice which the IFI believes will minimize, if not eliminate, these problems if used consistently by threaded fastener purchasers:

1. Place an upper case **M** in front of the *nominal diameter* of all metric thread designations whether the threads are machine screw series or spaced threads.
2. Always follow the nominal diameter designation with an upper case **X** followed by the *thread pitch*.

Examples:

Nominal Diameter (D)	Pitch (P)	Designation
8 mm	1.25 mm	M8X1.25
4 mm	1.4 mm	M4X1.4
4.8 mm	1.6 mm	M4.8X1.6



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It is understood that this suggestion is contrary to the ISO practice where the pitch designation is omitted when the thread has the standard coarse thread pitch. This practice is widely accepted outside the United States, but since not all users of threads know what the standard thread pitches are, this practice contributes to misunderstandings and errors that can be eliminated by including the thread pitch in the designation of metric threads.

It is also understood that spaced threads specifically made according to ISO 1478 are designated using "ST" (example: ST3.9) instead of "M". This practice is acceptable, but if it is not specifically known that the thread is to be supplied to ISO 1478, the IFI suggests the use of the "M" before the nominal diameter and the pitch included in the designation to avoid potential confusion and/or errors.

For more information send questions to [techinfo@indfast.org](mailto:techinfo@indfast.org).

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