

Rigid

Directors Report — Chris Trevithick

Great success....



Rigid had its most successful Christmas trading period to date, exceeding our sales expectations and providing an excellent service for our customers throughout the holiday. With Desborough providing the manufacturing capability and the sales office and logistics teams

taking care of deliveries, we met all of our customers' needs — so well done everyone. Indeed, there was such demand last year over Christmas that we have decided to run both Selby and Desborough manufacturing this year to ensure that we keep raising our service levels.

To support our service offering, plans are progressing rapidly for the extension to facilities at Selby. By the end of the year, we should have additional pallet storage and space for converting machinery, which will make Selby one of the largest corrugated manufacturing and stockholding facilities in the UK. With these resources, VPK will ensure that the infrastructure is in place for the continued growth of Rigid in the UK, again underlining their commitment and support for our operations.

Trading conditions are shaping up to be challenging in 2008, with rising costs in almost every area making our traditional obsession with cost control even more critical. We have made the need for cost consciousness central to our business model from day one. 'Watching the pennies and letting the pounds take care of themselves' is familiar to you all. We will continue to grow, but will be rigorous in keeping down overheads and indirect costs. All of us have our part to play and by doing so, we will contribute to the continued success of the business.

So we embark on another exciting year of growth, expansion and success. New building facilities and machinery may provide us with the right tools to do the job but it is all of us who will ultimately 'make it happen'.



Donaldson Filter Components move to Rigid

Working with the best in the world

"Setting new industry standards!" is how Donaldson Filter Components Ltd describes the overall service provided by Rigid. This leading worldwide supplier of commercial and industrial filters is using Rigid to supply plain and printed corrugated transit cases for packaging some 120 of its products.



Maintaining a next day delivery for the most popular box sizes, Rigid is consistently achieving 100% delivery performance. In addition, the company has attained a 25% increase in pallet utilisation for Donaldson and is also planning case range rationalisation, board grade reduction programmes and improvements in design to optimise its automatic packaging systems in order to generate further valuable savings.

Commenting on the service, Sharon Pearce, Purchasing Manager, Donaldson Filter Components Ltd, says: "Introducing Rigid as a supplier has proved an excellent decision. Fast availability of cases is vital to our UK and export sales, which involve supplying filters to high profile names within the automotive industry. Our 24 most popular sizes are now available

on a 24-hour call-off - order by 11:00 am and the delivery arrives next morning. The remaining 96 cases are delivered on a three day turnaround with Rigid having capacity to manufacture and replenish our entire stock within only one day!"

She continues, "Apart from setting challenging new standards in supply chain management, Rigid has also used its expertise to optimise our pallet utilisation. As a result, we have increased our case stacking height from six to eight rows, improving delivery and storage efficiencies significantly. We are also talking to Rigid about re-engineering all our cases in a move to rationalise the extensive number of sizes required. Reducing board grades without compromising case performance is another key area where we see Rigid helping reduce our costs."

An Easter parachute rescue!

Understanding the pressures during the busy Easter period, we will be providing customers with a 'parachute service' — emergency supplies of packaging in ultra-quick lead times. This service is particularly geared for companies experiencing large and sudden increases in demand over Easter. Call our sales team for more information about this service!

ONGOING TRAINING IS ESSENTIAL

Darren Melville, Production Manager/Converting at Desborough, confirms that we are putting all our factory employees through various courses to help further enhance their skill sets. Run through the West Nottinghamshire College, the courses include:

- Business Improvement Techniques (NVQ Level 2) Process Pathway - this is tailored to our own existing procedures and covers areas such as:
 - Complying with statutory regulations and organisational safety requirements
 - Contributing to effective team working
 - Applying workplace organisation
 - Applying continuous improvement techniques
 - Creating visual management systems
 - Applying set up times reduction techniques

- Performing Manufacturing Operations (NVQ Level 2) - this is tailored to our own existing procedures and covers areas such as:

- Complying with statutory regulations and organisational safety requirements
- Promoting effective working relationships
- Improving internal communication
- Contributing to effective team working
- Transferring materials
- Preparing for manufacturing operations
- Ensuring effective handover of manufacturing operations
- Improving quality

There are also foundation degrees in Management and Business Improvements being done by various members of the management team.

“These qualifications are being used to develop and give added value to companies

around the EU and have proven themselves in worth,” explains Darren. “This training can improve retention of staff, reduce quality complaints, improve communication and increase productivity, making people more aware and giving staff the knowledge and techniques to address problem situations and working as part of a team to resolve them. These courses are tailored to our own needs and training is given with very little interruption to daily activities.

“It is key that we make the most of the training, monitor its progress and ensure that it is utilised. We believe in our staff and know that this will give us added value, enabling us to take on more work and give our customers greater satisfaction. We consider it important to develop our teams as Rigid continues to grow, giving us the skills we need, when we need them.”

people news... people news... people news... people news...

BIRTH NEWS

We're delighted to report that **Philip Burditt**, former Director, employee and grandson of the Founder (Harold Burditt) became a father to Charles William Howard on 18th January. Charles weighed in at 9lb 2.5oz. In other birth news, **Mike Rook**, Technical Support at Selby, became a father to Carys on 4th February weighing in at 8lb 12oz.

'RACE FOR LIFE'

A handful of Rigid's ladies are doing the 'Race for Life' this year. Of the ladies taking part on Sunday 25th May, we have two from Rigid Charta and two from Rigid Paper. **Sharon Foster, Clair Kemsley, Dawn Lancaster** and **Jane Walker** will all be pulling on their training shoes to raise vital funds for the charity. The group's sponsorship page is www.raceforlifesporsorme.org/ThePapergirls/ In other 'Race for Life' news, two ladies are taking part in the event on Wednesday 11th

June at Silverstone. **Allison Clark**, who works in payroll at Desborough, has her sponsorship page at

www.raceforlifesporsorme.org/allisonclark/

Allison is joined by **Emma Pickering**, who works in the customer service department —

www.raceforlifesporsorme.org/emmapickering/

Gemma Rafferty, who is based at Desborough is taking part on Sunday 18th May — she hasn't got a homepage, but is instead just using good old fashioned pen and paper!

AWARDS AND EXAMS

We're happy to note **Darren Melville**, (see above), recently finished his Level 5 Diploma Business Management. Keep up the good work!

CHARITY WALK

In December, **Steven Panter** walked 7 miles to raise money for Finley Armer, a local baby, and son of friends. Finley was diagnosed with severe positional plagiocaphaly and severe

brachycephaly (flattening of the back and side of the head). There was no NHS funding available, despite the threat to Finley's future. His mother was lucky enough to find a cranial doctor in London and this resulted in the fitting of a special £2,000 helmet.

“With incredible, overwhelming and unbelievably generous donations and sponsors from everyone at Rigid — and a large donation from the company itself — I was able to contribute an astonishing £1,015 to the cause,” says Steven. “I am glad to report that Finley's skull is now taking the shape of the helmet and soon there will be no signs of a problem ever being there. A huge thank you to everyone — it meant the world to Finley, and his parents Donna and Lee.” Following an article in a local newspaper and the exploits of Steven, various additional donations were received from local organisations and the total amount raised was £3,564.

about us

Who we are

Rigid Corrugated is part of VPK Packaging Group - one of the fastest growing independent European manufacturers of recycled paper and corrugated cases with an annual turnover of some €480 million. Apart from the UK, it has a network of operating plants in Belgium, Holland, France, Poland and Romania.

In recent years the Group, (which is listed on the Belgium stock exchange), has evolved from a product-focused organisation to a service organisation, concentrating on customers' specific needs in terms of tailored packaging solutions, supply chain optimisation and just-in-time deliveries.

Part of VPK since 2000, Rigid Containers has been an industry pioneer in meeting the demands of the modern supply chain in the UK by introducing innovative, integrated manufacturing and logistics facilities with large warehousing capabilities for an unrivalled outstanding ex-stock service.

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