

Making progress despite uncertainty

As I reported in the last newsletter, the first part of the year started well for the Group, with all businesses improving on their previous performance, however, in the last couple of months we have seen things slowing down a little, even Plysolene, which has always been a key contributor of overall group performance, was not immune to a slow down in July.

What is the outlook?

If we are to believe the economists in the media the global economy seems to be somewhere close to turmoil due to China's growth forecasts being slashed. Does this affect us?

Well, we supply directly into China and many other emerging markets from Watts Urethane. In Plysolene and Watts Truck & Van we also supply customers whose futures depend, to varying degrees, on the Far Eastern economy.

It is not doom and gloom, the UK economy has recovered and we have a stable government, currency and interest rates look set to remain low for the foreseeable future. Also the Group itself is in excellent financial health and will invest where we need to.

What do we need to do?

As always we need to strive for efficiency, so we can compete effectively. But more than that, let's think fresh, and aggressively market our products and services to existing and prospective customers. We should promote ourselves through all available means. We should make sure we are ahead of our competitors. Let's think outside the box!

Stewart Charters

Managing Director, Watts Group



There will be changes to my role from October. Please see the back page for full details of these.

Watts inside

If you have any ideas you would like to have considered for the next newsletter then please email details to dianeprice@watts-group.co.uk

DAF dominates the market

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DAF Trucks march on

After another 1000+ new truck registrations in July, DAF's year-to-date dominance of the Euro 6 market climbed to 27.4% market share. The dominance is attributed to three main factors – they are the most reliable range of trucks with the lowest operating costs, backed up by the industry's most comprehensive network and are built in Britain. More than 6,200 DAF Trucks have been delivered so far in 2015.



DAF continues to dominate the market

Farewell to Linda

Linda Salvidge has bid farewell to the Watts Truck & Van Finance Team and taken early retirement. Linda has been with the company for almost 10 years. Thank you, Linda, for all your hard work & commitment to the business and we wish you all the best for the future.



WTV farewells Linda Salvidge

“Congratulations to the Service Teams at Swansea & Newport, who have once again achieved a 100% MOT first time pass rate. It's very impressive to receive top marks in this important discipline.”



Vale of Glamorgan Show Fonmon Castle. A lovely sunny day at the Vale of Glamorgan Show which was complimented by a large number of visitors to our Isuzu stand.

Paul powers his way through the first 25 years



Paul Novis is presented with power tools to mark 25 years of service

Congratulations to Swansea Technician Paul Novis on achieving 25 years' service with the company. He has carried out DAF Aid duties for 18 years, is a Shift Supervisor, HGV Driver, MOT Tester, Apprentice Mentor and Level 3 Technician. Watts Truck & Van Dealer Principal, Simon Griffin, presented Paul with some power tools as a token of the company's appreciation.

Peter clocks off

Peter Cunningham from Cardiff Service has retired from Watts Truck & Van. We thank him for his consistency and commitment over the years. Peter has been presented with a watch as a token of the company's appreciation.



The Cardiff team bids farewell to Peter

New product hitting the market

Urethane has developed a new Moulded Edge Squeegee Blade, in response to customer demand. The new blade offers the benefits of Urethane's superior polyurethane technology with a sealed printing edge. The team is also looking to develop equipment to create a Linear-Cut back edge (giving a sharp edge) – this development would give Urethane a unique selling point over the current global market leader.

Will Barker, sales manager at Urethane, said: "This new product line is superior in terms of the material and has the added benefit of having a useable Linear Cut back edge."

Once developed, it will be promoted and sold through the existing distributor network.



Urethane continue to innovative to stay ahead of the competition

QWheels

Making dreams come true

QWheels has recently started refurbishing wheels for Dream World theme park in Australia. Dream World is so impressed with the product and service that they are shipping the wheels all the way from Queensland to Lydney and back again.

Callum Robin, Business Manager at QWheels, said: "We are just coming to the second season of supplying them and they are growing the amount of wheels and rides we provide for."

In other news, Peppa Pig's wheels are also running a bit more smoothly... Urethane is also supplying Paultons Park (home to Peppa Pig World), with wheels for their rides as well.



FESPA success

Urethane had great success exhibiting at FESPA (Federation of European Screen Printers Associations) in Cologne, with more 200 meetings held across 5 days, with people from more than 50 countries. It highlighted shifts in the globally printing industry, as well as providing new opportunities for a number of polyurethane products.



Another 'colourful' string to Plysolene's bow

Plysolene has launched its first High Impact Polystyrene standard colour range which features 14 eye catching colour swatches.

The swatches are targeted at Plysolene's existing and potential Point of Sale customer base; when time is of the essence customers can simply choose one of the colours and receive their order in the time it could take to match and gain approval of a bespoke colour.

Commenting on the range, Sales Manager Rob Kingsbury said "We've had extremely positive feedback on the potential of the swatches in helping our key customers secure orders that previously they would have lost based on lead-time."



Plysolene's new standard colour range



Plysolene's latest work on display at Halfords

Plysolene sheet shines at Halford's

Plysolene's handywork is currently on display in Halfords. The company recently supplied Carter Design Group a colour matched Red High Impact Polystyrene gloss sheet, which was thermoformed and fabricated into display units for Halfords. The units formed part of a promotion for the new Autoglym car care range.

Message from the Chairman



Earlier in the summer, Stewart Charters informed me that he wished to have a different work life balance and he wished to lessen some of his day to day activities and responsibilities.

I am very pleased to say that this does not mean we will be losing Stewart completely, as he will be remaining a Director of the Group and also maintaining contact with Plysolene and Watts Urethane.

During July the Group appointed Tracey Smith, our Group Financial Controller, as a director. Tracey joined us a year ago and her responsibilities are being extended to look after some key Group functions including IT, Payroll and some day to day property matters.

My Board colleagues, Peter Rilett and Piers Thurston, will increase their involvement in various aspects of the Group's activities. I am remaining Chairman and hope to continue to see many of you on our visits to various locations.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Stewart for his energy, enthusiasm and active guidance throughout this millennium as my most senior executive colleague. I am glad that his advice, support and knowledge is remaining with us even if some of the daily contact may be missing.

John Thurston, Chair

New Watts website



The Watts Group website has been renovated and refreshed. The goal was to change the responsive platform to one that works on tablets and mobiles (this is more customer-friendly and also optimises search results). We also wanted to refresh the look and feel to make it more modern and easy to navigate.

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