

"We have been developing some concepts and ideas over the last couple of years that we hope will open doors for us into a new market niche," he says. "Boxes and cartons incorporating plastic window patches are big business. We are the biggest supplier of polyester products in Europe so we can supply virtually anything the customer wants. But it is the next stage in the process that offers us an opportunity."

PSG is running a trial with a large window patching outfit, who is also a major supplier to high street supermarket chains and brand owners, to explore the benefits of using roll-fed converting technology in place of flat bed, single sheet production.

"We are working on a standardised matrix with built-in fixed costs for wastage that will cut current production time in half, from between seven to 10 days down to between three and five days," says the managing director. "We do this using our roll-fed machine. And, the bonus is, we can manufacture two to three times more components in the same time frame. This all adds up to significant savings in time and the final cost so directly boosting our customers' bottom line."

An added, and almost unseen, benefit of this new approach is that PSG's competitors that convert on a sheet-by-sheet basis will have to cost every aspect of every job before quoting whereas PSG will be able to standardise its pricing.

In anticipation of this going live, Lawrence



PSG Group: the power of teamwork:

Gardezi has sanctioned the development of a range of standard films under its Polymex brand, where each product can be tailored to a customer's exact requirement.

Standard matrix materials and roll-fed converting and diecutting add up to a win-win situation for PSG by eliminating as many of the inherent risks as possible and delivering time and cost benefits for customers.

Company growth

The PSG Group until recently had been experiencing up to 10 percent annual growth year on year. This all changed last year resulting in a decrease of 5.5 percent on a company turnover.

It was a different story 10 years ago for the family-owned business at time Lawrence Gardezi joined it.

"We were losing money fast," he says. "It was perfectly clear that we had to invest our way out of a tough situation. If we had not done this we would probably not be here now."

He trimmed the sails by reducing staffing levels and began a rigorous regime of efficiency improvements coupled with investment in new machinery and a state-of-the-art clean room without which the company could not have competed.

Now, 50 percent of the ISO 9001:2008 and BRC registered company's turnover comes from food packaging – which includes carton windows, laminated film, lidding and overwraps with big customers being Benson Box and ITW and stocking product with £1.5 million inventories from DuPont, Mitsubishi and Toray and others.

The remainder is spread amongst a host of applications, such as camera lens protection for Formula One racing cars; fingerprint kits for all UK police forces and hospital visors.

In total, PSG has a contractual call-off stock totalling £1.3 million.

"Polyester is an oil-derived material," explains Lawrence Gardezi, "and as such is subject to the vagaries of the international oil trade and volatile currency fluctuations. Recently we have experienced a roller coaster ride that makes price stability difficult to maintain and difficult to hedge against."

This means that PSG's suppliers are, oddly enough, more important than customers. PSG Group owns its own building, which is fortunate given its situation close to central London. It has 40,000 square feet of warehouse space stocked with more than 1,200 tonnes of polyester-based materials and converts in excess of 40,000 kilograms of film on a daily basis. Rolls from 10-1600mm wide and sheets from 15mm square to 1270x1524mm can be converted, not just on the new CW800 and the Deacro C24A but on a variety of slitting machines.

Materials in addition to polyester include paper, board and other films such as OPP, Polystyrene, PLA, PVC and Polyethylene.

Film types available include clear, super clear, hazy, milky white, matt, opaque white, black, metallised and coloured. Films can be supplied uncoated, slip treated, antistatic, corona treated, chemically pre-treated for adhesion (to solvent as well as water-based inks, adhesives and resins), diazo coated, co-extruded (heatseal), dyed and PvDC coated.

Although UK-based, the group trades throughout the eurozone and in the US and has seen its export sales rise year on year, although plans to open warehouse facilities in Germany and the US have been put on hold until the economic indicators are more encouraging. PSG Group also operates a full environmental friendly recycling programme, which includes all supplier packaging materials and the waste produced on site.

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PSG Group: lightning fast slitting