

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly!

Within the Weedon Group, our focus has always been on our customers. We see our relationship as a partnership. Our aim is to understand the challenges you face and to add value to your businesses, including looking at ways to reduce your costs. Putting the customer at the centre of all we do has been key in helping us build relationships with some of the UK's leading brand-owners and manufacturers.

In November this year we appointed Andrea Gratton as our new Group Customer Experience Manager. Instigating a customer experience 'deep dive' survey was her first major project aimed at improving our customers' experience. Over the past few months, she has been speaking to as many of our customers as possible to find out what you think of us. We want to know – the good, the bad and the ugly! Andrea visited a cross section of customers – packaging and display customers of all different sizes and across various industries – and she discussed a wide range of issues.

What did we find?

Some of your comments have delighted us; others have given us pause for thought! But all have been heard and taken on board. We have gained an invaluable insight into what we are doing well – as well as those areas where change is needed!

Andrea says:

"On a positive note, we had some great feedback on the professionalism and knowledge of our team, and also praise for the quality of our finished goods and overall creativity".

Areas of concern included delivery schedules, our quotation process and our speed of communication. We have already put new measures in place to improve our performance in these areas – and more is in the pipeline.

- For example, we are currently changing all our quotes to better reflect the information our customers need to know. This will be in place early in the New Year.
- To improve the speed we get back to you with our prices, we are now rolling out our quoting system to all our project managers so that they will be able to quote directly for many straightforward projects.
- As a business we are also reviewing all our roles and responsibilities, making channels of communication clearer so we can respond more quickly to our customers' enquiries.
- Delivering 'on time, in full' is one of our priorities. But we can always do better. So in the coming weeks, we will be looking at our planning processes to see how we can make improvements to ensure we are delivering to our customers exactly when they need us.

This is an evolving picture – our customers' needs are changing all the time and we want to make sure that we keep pace with that at all times. So this process of feedback and improvement will be ongoing.

It's not too late to have your say. Andrea will be back out on the road again early in 2015 to measure how well our new initiatives are working and to meet new customers. If you have any feedback to offer, she would be delighted to hear from you at andrea@weedonpsc.com.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly!

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Introducing Andrea Gratton Group Customer Experience Manager

Andrea has worked in Point of Sale (POS) and packaging for the last 10 years and joined the Weedon Group as a display sales manager in 2009. In a previous career, she worked in the motorcycle racing industry which, she says, "was fun for a time but involved a lot of windswept race tracks and industrial doors"! One could say that she is still working on a race track, as speed of delivery is a key element in her work now!

Andrea is excited to be taking a Group-centred role. She says:

"Moving from a narrowly-defined position in Weedon PSC, it's really interesting for me to see the big picture.

"As a business, we feel that the customer should be present in every decision and should be considered at every touch point in the job schedule. In my new role, I'm looking at how we interact with our customers at every level, ensuring that we fully understand their needs and provide the level of service that they expect, when they need it."

Married with a young family, outside of work Andrea can be found circuit-training, lifting weights or boxing. She also has a passion for property renovation.



**We wish all our
customers and suppliers
a very Happy Christmas
and a prosperous
New Year.**



Design Focus

In this column, we introduce some of the innovative ideas which our in-house graphic and structural designers have developed to solve specific problems for our customers.

A New Innovation in Tamper-Evident Packaging



The Problem

With more and more goods being bought online and delivered to the customer's door, security is becoming increasingly important in countering both theft and contamination.

Internet retailers need cost-effective packaging that cannot be secretly opened in transit, its contents removed or damaged and then the package resealed – with no-one any the wiser until the customer takes delivery!

The Solution

Our new locking mechanism for tamper-evident packaging which cannot be opened without tearing the box. The front seal folds and clips into the case using a clever one-way push-lock.

The Benefits

Our designers have wide experience and provide innovative solutions to meet even the most complex of logistical problems. They have created a new locking mechanism, constructed out of the board itself as part of the manufacturing process. As a result:

- The package cannot be opened without damaging the box, making any interference obvious.
- The packaging does not require any special labels or tapes – which also minimises production costs.

This packaging is ideal for fragile and high value goods such as electronics, gifts, plants and flowers.

Our Internet packaging range also includes [Securepak](#), which uses adhesive tape applied inline on our corrugator as part of the production process – ideal for sending books, CDs etc safely through the post.

Download other [case studies](#) to find out how we have used our expertise to solve specific packaging problems for our customers.

What's New Green Glory



The 'natural' eco-friendly printing inks which we use have been recognised for environmental best practice. Earthinks® competed against more than 500 other nominations and won a Green Apple Environment Award in the national campaign to find Britain's greenest companies, councils and communities.

Earlier this year, Weedon PSC Ltd became the country's first manufacturer of corrugated packaging to use predominantly natural printing inks and coatings when we were awarded exclusive rights to print RRP and POS displays using Earthinks® and Earth Coatings. The move is part of our drive to use environmentally friendly materials in our manufacturing processes.

Traditional water-based inks and coatings are based on synthetic oil derived chemicals or polymers and are therefore fossil-based and subject to oil and polymer shortages in the future. Alternative so-called 'natural' inks and coatings usually only contain up to 5% renewable products. But Earthinks® and Earth Coatings are made from 80% natural materials.

As a result of their Green Apple Award success, Solar Inks, the company that manufactures Earthinks® and Earth Coatings, has been invited to have their winning paper published in *The Green Book*, the leading international work of reference on environmental best practice, so that others around the world can follow their example and learn from their achievement.

The company could also progress to represent the UK in the European Business Awards for the Environment.

The Green Apple Awards began in 1994 and have become established as the country's major recognition for environmental endeavour among companies, councils, communities and countries. The awards are supported by the Environment Agency, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, the Chartered Institution for Wastes Management and other independent bodies.

Earth Coatings were also recently "Highly Commended" in the British Coatings Federation Sustainable Innovation Awards. These awards recognise, reward and promote outstanding innovations within the coatings industry that have the greatest impact on the sustainability of the supply chains in which the industry's products, processes and services play a role.

10 top tips to drive your profitability

Times are hard. We are all looking for ways to cut costs. So we thought we would send you our favourite corrugated packaging tips to help you save money and boost sales.

- 1 Integrate the various stages of the packaging process – consider the secondary packaging along with the primary packaging to save time and gain greater control of the whole process.
- 2 Co-ordinate the design of the various aspects of your packaging through a single point of contact.
- 3 Consult the experts and design with your customer in mind – if it won't work in-store, forget it!
- 4 Think creatively – consider new ideas.
- 5 Exploit the latest technology – new 3D software packages can help you – and your customer – visualise what your product will look like in-store.
- 6 Review your board grade – it should be strong enough to do the job but don't waste money going over the top.
- 7 Do a full supply chain audit to reduce the size of your packaging and the space it takes up – check how your boxes are handled, how they fit on your trucks, how they stack on the pallet.
- 8 Use shopper marketing data to design effective Point of Sale displays and increase impulse sales.
- 9 Watch your packaging lead times – minimise the time between manufacture and shelf.
- 10 Reassess your packaging stock levels – consider staggered delivery options to minimise storage requirements.

Gearing up for Growth New Group Finance Director



plan – we aim for Group turnover to reach £40 million by 2019.

Chris was born in Swansea and graduated with a BA (Hons) in Business Studies from the University of Wales. He is a qualified accountant and Member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA). He has spent the last 16 years working for DS Smith, a major provider of corrugated packaging in Europe.

In his leisure time, Chris says he 'attempts' to play cricket and golf: "A society handicap of 18 hides the frequent ability to have a bad round!".

John Weedon, Managing Director of the Weedon Group, commented:

"Chris comes to us with an impressive pedigree. Not only is he a fully qualified and talented accountant, but his past experience in the corrugated industry made him an ideal candidate for this key role in our Group.

"He is a great addition to the new team we are putting together to handle the significant growth we expect over the next five years."

We have appointed Chris Richards as our new Group Finance Director. He took up the position at the end of October and will have responsibility for the finances of Weedon PSC, Weedon Corrugated Products and i2i europe.

We have been restructuring our Group management team recently to help us meet the targets in our five-year strategic growth

Sophie's New York Marathon

In November, Sophie Bennett, account director with i2i europe, successfully completed the New York Marathon. In the face of 20 miles of head winds, she completed the race in 4 hours 30 minutes. This was her second New York Marathon. In 2012 she ran it to raise £4,000 for Cancer Research, despite it being officially cancelled following the devastation caused by Hurricane Sandy.

Sophie had a good opportunity to see something of New York during the race. She ran through five boroughs: Staten Island, Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn and Manhattan, finishing in Central Park, where her daughter was waiting to congratulate her. Over a million spectators viewed the event and 55,000 runners took part.

Sophie is running London and Brighton next....



Industry Insight

Corrugated Rising to the Challenge of Evolving Retail Sector

According to the [Confederation of Paper Industries \(CPI\)](#), significant capital outlay in state-of-the-art digital printing equipment is enabling the corrugated industry to offer innovative solutions for display packaging and personalisation, which can provide a critical edge in the fiercely competitive retail environment. UK corrugated packaging companies have invested almost £500 million in new technology and plant over the last two years, in part to provide retailers and brand-owners with effective on-pack communications to entice customers.

Hibernating Brits affect shopping trends

According to new research by [VoucherCodes.co.uk](#), 80% of British consumers now prefer a cosy night in with the family to a night on the town. The lure of Saturday night TV shows such as 'Strictly Come Dancing' and 'The X-Factor' combined with the need to watch expenditure after a summer of fun are key factors. But for the majority, it is the deteriorating weather that makes 73% of Brits claim they would prefer to hibernate at home rather than face the cold outside.

The research also revealed what constitutes a perfect winter night for the majority of Brits – a takeaway, a drink in hand, a spot of retail therapy and their favourite TV programme. The average British consumer spends £35 on drinks, snacks and takeaways for their Saturday night in. Nearly half (44%) of the UK will go online shopping for anything from Christmas presents to their next holiday while they relax in front of the TV. For the average Brit, second screen spending totals up to over £125!

Partly as a result of these changing spending patterns, we are seeing a growth in demand for online retail packaging and packaging for takeaway food.

The Impact of Packaging



According to a recent article in 'Packaging Europe', good packaging is an important factor in attracting consumers to a product and hence in increasing customer base. Besides having an immediate impact on sales, packaging also plays a crucial role in the overall brand experience. Statistics support the fact that even a good product might lose potential customers due to poor packaging. Global research carried out this year includes key findings about the impact of packaging:

1. Packaging influences product satisfaction

Only 11% of global consumers are completely satisfied with packaging today.

2. Packaging impacts shopping behaviour

In-store

- 64% tried a product because the package caught their eye
- 41% purchased a product because of the packaging
- 36% switched brands because of negative experience with new packaging

Online shopping

Because of packaging:

- 29% researched more information about a product
- 20% friended or became a fan of the brand/company on social networks
- 22% wrote an online review that mentions packaging
- 18% posted something about a product on social media

3. Impact on global consumers

Consumers from different countries have different attitudes to the importance of packaging.

Country	% who say that packaging is important to overall product satisfaction
India	71
Turkey	70
Brazil	60
Russia	43
South Africa	43
China	38
Germany	26
UK	21
US	18
Japan	17

- India and South Africa express the highest satisfaction with product packaging – 59% (Avg 50%).
- In Brazil, Turkey, Germany and Russia, consumers believe that packaging is more important than brand for overall product satisfaction – 25% (Avg 50%).
- Japan recorded the lowest satisfaction rating with product packaging.

Weedon

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