

# SERVICE DEALER

THE VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY

SEPT / OCT 19

## MIGHTY OAKES DO GROW

Oakes Bros. continue to look to the future, as MD Richard Haines tells us of plans for recruitment, expansion and diversification

### MKM Agriculture

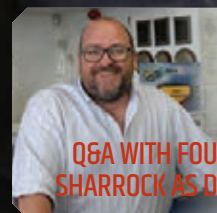
Specialist ATV & UTV dealer expands with new branch opening

### Preparing for Stage V

Iseki makes key product launch and looks to take on more dealers

### Apprenticeships

New scheme described as a solid foundation on which to start a career



### CONTINUING THE LEGACY

Q&A WITH FOURTH-GENERATION OWNER JAMES SHARROCK AS DEALERSHIP EXPANDS TERRITORY

# INVEST IN YOUR FUTURE

THE  
WORLD LEADER  
IN ROBOTIC  
MOWING

COPYRIGHT © 2019 HUSQVARNA AB (PUBL), ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

## SHAPING THE FUTURE TOGETHER IN PARTNERSHIP

Husqvarna has a history of innovation and has adapted and evolved for 330 years. Legislation, battery technology, robotics and digitalisation are bringing about rapid change in our industry. As a company we are driving change, having invested in future technologies for over 20 years, positioning us as technical leaders and innovators. Investing in partnerships with our authorised dealer network allows us to meet the challenges and demands of an ever-changing industry.

To find out more and to enquire about opening an account please contact us at [HUSQVARNA.COM/UK](https://www.husqvarna.com/uk)



**Husqvarna**  
READY WHEN YOU ARE

## CONTENTS

- 4 NEWS**
- 14 CONFERENCE & AWARDS 2019**  
Details of keynote speaker
- 16 PREPARING FOR STAGE V**  
Iseki UK launches new product and looks to recruit dealers
- 20 CEREALS 2019**  
Plenty to interest specialist dealers at this year's technical event for the arable industry
- 24 DEALER Q&A**  
With James Sharrock of Sharrocks
- 30 MKM AGRICULTURE**  
ATV & UTV specialist opens new branch
- 34 BUSINESS MONITOR**  
Results of business confidence survey
- 36 MIGHTY OAKES DO GROW**  
Oakes Bros. continue to look to the future with plans for recruitment, expansion and diversification
- 42 APPRENTICESHIPS**  
New scheme is a solid foundation to start a career, says Kubota
- 46 SME DIGEST**
- 50 VIEW FROM ACROSS THE POND**
- 51 DIARY OF A SEASON**  
With Briants of Risborough
- 52 NEW PRODUCTS**
- 56 EVENTS**
- 57 IN MY VIEW**  
With Chris Biddle
- 58 JIM GREEN**

## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

**W**elcome to September/October 2019's edition of *Service Dealer* magazine.

As we head into the autumn period of dealer days, shows and conferences, how's the season been thus far for you? That's a question we posed on the *Weekly Update* recently, the results of which you can read in this issue.

It does appear that the term 'rollercoaster', which has been bandied about a few times this year, is proving accurate for many. Perhaps not as tough as 2018 for dealers with the swathes of burnt, dead grass across the country, but not plain sailing by any means. Some of you have been telling us that servicing has been holding up, but the squeeze is being felt both in sales and in the rising overhead costs inherent in running a small business.

What has been looming in the background, of course, regardless of climatic conditions, has been Brexit. Nobody knows what effect this will have on us all once (if!) it goes through at the end of October. What does appear to be clear is that the uncertainty for both consumers and businesses, hasn't been doing anybody any favours at all. Perhaps with some clarity, that rollercoaster might take an upwards trajectory and give the season some legs?

There will be plenty of events coming up this autumn which will allow dealers a chance to plan ahead for next year – let's just hope everyone has as much information as possible in their arsenal, to allow them to make the most informed choices possible.



[www.servicedealer.co.uk](http://www.servicedealer.co.uk)

## OUR PEOPLE

**PUBLISHER**  
DUNCAN MURRAY-CLARKE

**EDITOR**  
STEVE GIBBS  
[steve@servicedealer.co.uk](mailto:steve@servicedealer.co.uk)

**AGRICULTURAL EDITOR**  
MARTIN RICKATSON  
[jmr.agriculture@gmail.com](mailto:jmr.agriculture@gmail.com)

**SME DIGEST EDITOR**  
ADAM BERNSTEIN  
[adam@adambernstein.co.uk](mailto:adam@adambernstein.co.uk)

**CONTRIBUTOR**  
LAURENCE GALE  
[laurence.gale@btinternet.com](mailto:laurence.gale@btinternet.com)

**PRODUCED BY**  
THE AD PLAIN LTD  
*Pipe House, Lupton Road, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 9BS, UK*  
01491 837 117  
[www.theadplain.com](http://www.theadplain.com)  
*Service Dealer is produced by The Ad Plain on behalf of Land Power Publications LLP*

**DESIGN & LAYOUT**  
IAIN ROBINSON

**ADVERTISING SALES**  
NIKKI HARRISON  
[nikki@theadplain.com](mailto:nikki@theadplain.com)  
01491 837 117

The acceptance and publication of advertising in *Service Dealer* magazine implies no representation or warranty on the part of *Service Dealer* or The Ad Plain Ltd (TAP) as to the reputation or standing of advertisers' products or services. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form whatsoever without the written permission of *Service Dealer* and TAP. The information contained in this publication is published in good faith and every effort has been made to ensure its accuracy. The publishers can accept no responsibility for any error or misrepresentation. All liability for loss, disappointment, negligence or other damage caused by reliance on information contained in this publication or in the event of any bankruptcy or liquidation or cessation of the trade in any company, individual or firm mentioned is hereby excluded.



## DEALERS

# BEN BURGESS TAKES ON PREDATOR

## *England & Wales distribution for stump grinders*

East Anglia grounds care equipment retailer, Ben Burgess GroundsCare Equipment, has announced that it has become the official distributor for stump grinder supplier Predator across England and Wales.

Ben Burgess said Predator manufactures narrow-access tree stump grinders with a reputation for producing high-quality, reliable machines to serve the arboricultural industry.

The company first partnered with Predator in February 2018. Since then, it said, demonstrations and sales of the machines have been extremely successful and complement the other arboricultural brands Ben Burgess has within its range.

Ben B Turner, Ben Burgess' Group GroundsCare Equipment Manager, said, "We're very pleased to be making this announcement. We've had great success since becoming a dealer for Predator and hope to go from strength to strength in the coming years. We will continue to sell Predator equipment directly within East Anglia and the Midlands and we will be appointing a select number of other dealers to assist us further afield."

In order to support the sales and after-care of the product across England and Wales as well as assisting the new network of suppliers, Ben Burgess has appointed Neal Hussey as Arboricultural Specialist. Neal has been with the company for 18 years.

"Predator stump grinders are very popular with our customers as they are compact and suit varying terrain and areas often difficult to access with other larger machinery," commented Neal. "There is fantastic potential for the range in the UK and I look forward to providing arborists with the opportunity for demonstrations across the country."

Simon Bradshaw, from Predator, said, "This exciting development builds on the team's incredible success over the last year, providing the highest level of service to Predator users. Their drive to appoint new dealers and service points across the region will be a huge asset to our existing customer base, providing a more local contact for sales and servicing."



Neal Hussey and Ben B Turner

## DEALERS



Kubota's Phil Catley with Highwood's Nick Green

## KUBOTA EXPANDS HIGHWOOD'S TERRITORY

*Ground care area increased*

Kubota (UK) Ltd has announced that Dorset-based dealership, Highwood, has expanded its ground care territory into the Bournemouth area.

Highwood, which has been a dealer with Kubota for over 15 years, is increasing its staff and service support to cover this new area that was previously operated under Longham's.

The expansion of Highwood and Kubota strengthens the partnership, displaying the Kubota ground care range across the South of England from Southampton to Bere Regis.

New Ground Care Dealer Manager, Phil Catley, who joined recently in the role of Dealer Manager – Southern Region for the tractor and ground care division, commented: "Our dealerships are instrumental to Kubota's growth and we're excited to continue working with Highwood for many years to come."

Kubota UK said it is committed to investing in and expanding its dealer network in order to support more businesses like Highwood.

Nick Green, Operations Director of Highwood, commented, "With the full range of Kubota ground care equipment available, we look forward to providing our new customers with the same first-class service enjoyed by our current clients."

## DEALERS



Fendt's Andy Davies, AGCO's Phil Bolton, former Steven Gregory, AGCO's Stephen Lumby and Crawfords' MD Wes Crawford

## RW CRAWFORD OPEN NEW DEPOT

*For Sussex and East Hampshire*

Farm equipment specialist RW Crawford has extended its territory across the South-East of England with a new depot at Billingshurst to serve farmers and contractors in Sussex and Hampshire.

Originally from Essex, Crawfords looks after the neighbouring county of Kent, so when the opportunity arose in the dealer network across the Sussex/Hampshire area the business took the decision to expand its territory and service offering.

Key franchises on offer from the new depot include Fendt and Valtra plus Amazone, Spearhead and HM Trailers. The move to Sussex also sees Crawfords take on the role of Väderstad dealer for the region. Alongside this, the business also holds the franchise for Isuzu pick-up trucks.

The firm's new territory stretches from East Sussex to the M3 in the

West. From the South coast it reaches northwards up into greater London, following the M25 up into Essex.

"We're really excited to be growing our business into new areas and are looking forward to dealing with new customers," explained Managing Director Wes Crawford.

"Our reputation has been built on service and that's something we plan to continue.

"Our new site in Billingshurst is positioned centrally, which is ideal for supporting our customers across the territory."

A recent open day at the new Billingshurst depot gave Crawfords the opportunity to show off the full range of products on offer. In addition to a comprehensive line-up of spare parts and a fully-equipped workshop, the branch has a range of Valtra demonstration tractors and Fendt's full-line offering.

## PEOPLE

# SENIOR APPOINTMENT AT HAYTER AND TORO

*Craig Hoare is new Sales and Marketing Manager*

Hayter and Toro have appointed a new Sales and Marketing Manager, Craig Hoare, who will oversee the sales and marketing operations for the brands and manage day-to-day activity.

Prior to his role at the company, Craig gained a wealth of sales experience through roles within and outside of the gardening industry. With an early career in the retail and service sector, he worked his way up into the role of General Manager at Garden Machines Northampton. During his 17 years at the firm, Craig gained a great understanding of the workings of a garden machinery dealership, overseeing showroom sales, service, workshops and spare parts. Alongside the running of the retail store, he was also responsible for the wholesale, insurance and e-commerce aspects of the business, with a focus on developing the marketing and promotion of the dealership.

In 2017, Craig made the move to EP Barrus Ltd, where he worked as Sales Manager for its garden division. He was responsible for the UK dealer network, where he oversaw the entire gardening division including profitability, stock management and marketing.

In his new role at Hayter and Toro, Craig will work closely with both the sales and marketing teams to strengthen and streamline the companies' presence in dealerships, online and through its marketing communications.

"I was really excited to join the Hayter and Toro team, as they are both significant cornerstones within the gardening sector," said Craig. "Having worked in organisations supplying Hayter and Toro's products, I feel I'm in a great position to drive the brands forward, increase sales and expand our market share online and within dealers.

"My role provides me with a unique opportunity to bring the sales and marketing teams closer, with an aim to strengthen existing relationships between the companies and their dealers to support our overall growth and success."



Craig Hoare

## DEALERS

## SDF MAKES SCOTTISH APPOINTMENT

*Nairn-based Hodge Plant Ltd*



SDF Hodge Plant

SDF says it has strengthened its agricultural sales and service capability in the North of Scotland with the appointment of Nairn-based Hodge Plant Ltd, as a full-line Deutz-Fahr dealer covering sales/service and parts across the full product range.

Depot Sales Manager, Graham Stuart, said the Deutz-Fahr equipment range covers small-hp ground care, amenity and agricultural tractors right up to the high-hp arable machines and combine harvesters.

He said it's a natural addition to the company's growing portfolio of top brand franchises.

"The wide product line-up coupled with the manufacturer's down-to-earth and helpful approach made taking on the franchise an easy decision," he said.

"We also plan to run a hire division to satisfy the growing demand for short to long-term hire of machinery and we're actively looking into adding more quality agricultural machinery names to our line-up to compliment the Deutz-Fahr brand."

**NEW**

# Workwear that fits.

**Introducing  
Kramp Clothing**

Years of experience, combined with the latest fashion trends and strong fabrics are combined into 4 brand new collections. Tailored fit for the job you and your customers need to do.

Discover our range on [kramp.com/clothing](http://kramp.com/clothing)

**ORIGINAL**  
KRAMP

**TECHNICAL**  
KRAMP

**PROTECT**  
KRAMP

**ACTIVE**  
KRAMP

**KRAMP**

It's that easy.

## PEOPLE

## BAGMA INAUGURATES NEW PRESIDENT

*Peter Arrand of Ripon Farm Services*



**Peter Arrand and Brian Sangster**

At this summer's Royal Highland Show, BAGMA's Scottish President, Brian Sangster, handed over the Chain of Office of the BAGMA Presidency to Vice President Peter Arrand of Ripon Farm Services.

Guests were invited to join the celebrations along with BAGMA's

very own piper. A special cake was provided for Brian and the Chain of Office was duly passed over.

Brian has been BAGMA President for four years, extending the normal two years to continue with a number of projects. He will continue to support Peter on the Bira Board of Management and as LE-TEC Chairman and BAGMA's representative in Scotland for training and education working with Lantra and RHET (Royal Highland Educational Trust), amongst other activities.

Brian and Peter were presented with a special pair of BAGMA 100th anniversary cuff-links by Bob Chapman, a past BAGMA and Bira President. Peter thanked Brian for his

many years of service. Keith Christian, BAGMA Director, presented Brian with a gift from both BAGMA and its parent group Bira, followed by a bottle of whisky as a gift from Alasdair Straker. Keith thanked Brian for being part of the BAGMA team and steering a steady ship over the last four years.

Peter Arrand, formerly RBM and now with Ripon Farm Services following a merger, will develop his own portfolio as BAGMA President with a major focus on training and education and developing the BAGMA Council with a view to encouraging dealers to be more aware of the importance of apprenticeships and recruitment into the land-based engineering sector.

## DEALERS

## DAVID EVANS JOINS NEW HOLLAND NETWORK

*Covering areas of South Wales*

New Holland has appointed David Evans Agricultural Ltd (DEAL) to cover the vacant territory around Bridgend in South Wales.

Located in the heart of The Vale of Glamorgan in Llancafarn near Cardiff, the company covers the M4 corridor from Chepstow to the Gower. Founded by David Evans in 1993, the company has been established for over 25 years and has built its reputation on service and quality brands which offer a good resale and part-exchange value.

The dealership will supply the full range of New Holland products including tractors, harvest machinery, telescopic handlers and construction equipment, and said it will bring to customers in the area a great level of

agricultural equipment knowledge and customer assistance.

David Evans, Managing Director at DEAL, commented, "We have built our business with one mission in mind, to supply quality, reliable and efficient new and used machinery whilst backing this up with an excellent service for today's farmer and agricultural contractor. We're excited by this latest move to grow our business in the area."

Pat Smith, New Holland Business Director UK & ROI, added, "We're delighted to have David and his team at DEAL joining our strong dealer network in Wales. The Cardiff-Bridgend area has been without a dealer for some months, so we're pleased to be able to advise our



**David Evans is welcomed to New Holland by George Mills, New Holland Area Sales Manager**

customers in the area that we are back. We look forward to working with David Evans Agricultural Ltd to grow its business with our full range of equipment. Together with our strong line-up and its excellent reputation, we anticipate a prosperous partnership."



## INDUSTRY

# NEW COMPANY INTRODUCES UTV BRAND TO UK

*Ground care area increased*



A new British company, BOSS ORV, has been formed to introduce, distribute and support the Spanish-made Corvus 4x4 off-road utility vehicles in the UK.

Headed by Managing Director Phil Everett, ex of Polaris Britain, Boss ORV will officially launch three models at the outset: TerrainDX4 EPS, TerrainDX4 PRO EPS and TerrainDX4 CAB EPS.

The company will launch these vehicles in early September, but there have been opportunities this summer for previews on dealer Ace ATV's stand at the Royal Three Counties Show and on the ATV Services (Scotland) stand at the Royal Highland Show.

At the time of speaking to *Service Dealer*, Phil confirmed he currently had three dealers signed up, the aforementioned Ace ATV and ATV Services (Scotland) as well as Johnston Tractors.

"In the meantime," said Phil, "we will be building a small, specialised dealer network throughout the UK to offer customers the highest level of service and support. We've

already had some great conversations with several dealers and we'll be looking to make some more key appointments."

Phil continued, "We're proud to be able to offer the Corvus range in the UK."

The Corvus main construction facility is in Murcia, Spain, where the company uses its own parts and components: gear box, transmission, chassis and technology systems. The company is part of the Tuxton/Yanmar group so it's a natural fit to marry up the normally aspirated, inline 3-cylinder 993cc Yanmar Diesel engine. The engine is Euro 6 compliant, leading the Corvus programme of designing systems for reducing emission levels. All the above-mentioned Terrain models are homologated to T1b tractor regulation and have a top speed of 40mph/65kp/h.

Corvus is building the Terrain for work primarily in agriculture, livestock, forestry, turf care and construction, but says they are highly adaptable vehicles ready for any demanding off-road workout.

## DEALERS

# CUB CADET EXPANDS NETWORK

## *New dealer on board*

A new addition to Cub Cadet's 200+ strong dealer network, Stubbings Bros, will stock the range at its dealership based in Ventnor on the Isle of Wight.

Owner and Director Andy Stubbings said, "We're thrilled to be the latest business joining Cub Cadet's strong dealership network. We're a family-run company built on 35-years of successful history and by joining forces with this well-respected brand we're broadening our offering of garden machinery while simultaneously growing our business connections."

Phil Noble, Field Sales and Technical Manager for Cub Cadet, added, "With the uncertainty and challenges our industry is experiencing this year, we're pleased to be welcoming Stubbings Bros on board. By expanding our dealer network we're able to bring our machines to more customers to strengthen our position in the competitive lawn-mowing market. We look forward to working with Andy and his team."



**Luke Stubbings, Sales Representative, with Andy Stubbings, Sales Director**

## INDUSTRY



Yanmar ASV loader

# YANMAR ACQUIRES LOADER MANUFACTURER

## *ASV Holdings in the US*

Yanmar Holdings in the US has announced an agreement to acquire Minnesota-based compact equipment manufacturer ASV Holdings Inc, a designer and manufacturer of compact tracked loaders and skid-steer loaders.

It has been reported that Yanmar is to acquire ASV through the mechanism of a statutory merger.

Giuliano Parodi, Executive Officer of Yanmar Holdings, stated, "We believe that the Yanmar Group's acquisition of ASV will significantly bolster Yanmar's compact equipment offerings in the loader segment, a product range vital for success in the all-important North American market." He added, "With

its highly-skilled workforce and quality compact tracked loader and skid-steer loader line-up, ASV is a great fit for both Yanmar's focus on quality, and our growth and expansion plans in the North American and global markets as it will create a comprehensive and global provider of compact equipment with virtually no overlap in distribution networks."

US trade magazine *Equipment Journal* said the transaction is expected to close in the third quarter of 2019, and Yanmar will acquire 100% of ASV's outstanding shares of common stock for \$70.70 million, or \$7.05 per share.

## OBITUARY



Chris Cullum - 30 Jun 1961 - 30 Jun 2019

## CHRIS CULLUM

### *John Miller Garden Machinery's general manager*

It is with great sadness that we report that Chris Cullum, general manager of John Miller Garden Machinery, based in Chippenham, Wiltshire, passed away recently on his 58th birthday, after fighting with leukaemia over the past 10 months.

Chris started work as a Saturday-boy with John Miller at the age of 14. When he left school he became an apprentice in the workshop with John. After 15 years he decided to widen his knowledge in the horticultural trade and moved on to sales. At the same time he took an evening course in accounting and business management.

Six years ago, John Miller stood down and Chris ran the company with John's son Stephen helping with sales.

Chris was well known in the garden machinery trade and served on the Honda Dealer Council for several years.

He was a larger than life character, respected by all and will be greatly missed by all at John Millers, including their customers who he had built a good relationship with.

Chris leaves his wife and two children.

His chosen charities were Bloodwise and Antony Nolan Bone Marrow Trust.

Experience  
**EGO AT SALTEX**

30 Oct – 31 Oct 2019.  
Stand No. J062

# WHEN CHOOSING BETWEEN A, B, OR C, MAY WE SUGGEST D?

$$P = \frac{F \times D}{T}$$

56V  
15.68 Wh

VIBRATION  
1.7m/s<sup>2</sup>  
NOISE  
LpA 80dB(A)



1014m<sup>3</sup>/h  
AIR VOLUME

AIR SPEED: 212km/h

FORCE: 19.2N



LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	BOOST
350mins	210mins	140mins	100mins	70mins

Times have changed. So have tools. And our new commercial range is all the proof you need. Take the EGO Power+ blower. It's powered by the most technologically advanced, petrol-matching, Lithium-ion battery system out there. It's built tough to withstand all-day use in any weather. Its impressive airflow beats every other handheld blower on the market, and while it packs all the power of petrol, it's significantly quieter, vibrates less and gives off zero fumes. So don't stick to what you know. Switch to the power of EGO.

**THE NEW EGO 56V COMMERCIAL RANGE.  
THERE'S NOTHING ELSE LIKE IT.**

#powerreimagined



If you're interested in becoming an EGO dealer call Henton & Chattell on 0115 986 2161.

Monday – Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm

**EGO™**  
POWER BEYOND BELIEF™

## DEALERS

## HORSCH APPOINTS HAMBLYS

### *For Devon and Cornwall*

HORSCH is partnering with the Hamblys dealer network to provide its range of cultivators, drills and sprayers to customers in Cornwall and Devon.

"I'm pleased to say that from 1st June 2019, Hamblys became official dealers and from 1st October we will have a trading area mirroring the current Claas trading boundaries," said Steve Perryman, Sales Director at Hamblys.

The dealers have five depots, located at Launceston and Redruth in Cornwall, Honiton and Torrington in Devon, and Bishops Lydeard in Somerset.

"Hamblys has an outstanding reputation for after-sales care and support and we're delighted to be working with them," commented Stephen Burcham, General Manager for HORSCH UK.



## DEALERS

## DAVID DIXONS JOINS ETESIA'S DEALERS

### *Supplying customers in the North-East of England*

David Dixons has been appointed as an Etesia dealer and will be distributing the company's complete product range throughout the North-East of England.

Based in Hexham, Northumberland, David Dixons has been a supplier, service engineer and adviser to the arboricultural and horticulture industries for over 37 years.

The company will now be supplying the complete range of Etesia products and Julian Weightman, Dealer Principal at David Dixons, said he's delighted with the announcement.

"We had a good chat about the products with Etesia, I could see the advantages that the products offer and it just went from there," he said. "I'm confident that the products are going to be popular with our land owner clients and our professional users who are wanting machines that perform day-in day-out consistently."

The range of products are available from David Dixons in the areas of Northumberland, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, and Middlesbrough and up to the Scottish borders.



"From our point of view as a dealership, we're interested in selling quality equipment," said Julian. "We're interested in working with customers that we're going to be working with for 20-30 years and Etesia's equipment is perfectly built to last and that fits very much in line with how we operate our business."

"On the face of it, Etesia may appear expensive but when you look at the life you will get out of the machines I know that our customers will get excellent value for money."



# TWO MORE FOR PELLENC

*Terra Firma and Greenlay*

Pellenc UK has welcomed Terra Firma and Greenlay to its growing dealership network, both of which will be distributing their full range of professional battery-powered equipment.

Terra Firma, part of Agrovista UK, is quickly developing into one of Scotland's largest specialist suppliers to the amenity and local authority markets. The company prides itself on providing the finest equipment and products and this means that it has to be very selective, according to Sales Adviser Allan Wright.

"We have no ambitions to become a normal grass machinery company," he said.

"It is for this reason that we are expanding the range of specialist equipment we offer and Pellenc is a perfect addition."

Allan claims that his mind was instantly made up as soon as he saw the products being demonstrated.

"We organised a few demonstrations and it was obvious that these were the kind of products that would be incredibly hard to not take on-board, especially with their green credentials and their low vibration and noise levels."

Greenlay, based in Cramlington, Northumberland, has

been serving both the professional and domestic turf markets since 1971. Boasting a 2,000sq ft showroom displaying a huge range of equipment, the company strives to ensure that the customer gets the best machine for the job at all times and Sales Administrator Harry Pattinson said the company is delighted to have added Pellenc to the collection.

"We never thought the opportunity would come about so we were delighted when we were approached by Pellenc," he said.

"It has so many benefits and I particularly like the fact that the battery can be transferred from different machines. The power on the equipment is instantaneous and the performance is very similar to two-stroke.

"Pellenc is aimed at the professional market which we want to continue to grow in, so it absolutely suits the quality product range that we already offer here at Greenlay."

The Pellenc range from Terra Firma is available in the areas of central Scotland, the Scottish borders and the West coast, while Greenlay is distributing the equipment to Northumberland, Tyne & Wear, Co Durham and Teeside.

# SERVICE DEALER

THE VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY  
SINCE 1988

CONFERENCE + AWARDS

2019

## GENERATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SPECIALIST TO DELIVER KEYNOTE

*Dr Eliza Filby to address  
dealer delegates*

**S**ervice Dealer has announced that the keynote address at November's Conference will be delivered by Dr Eliza Filby, a generational intelligence specialist.

Eliza is a writer, speaker and consultant who specialises in helping companies and services to understand generational shifts within politics, society and the workplace. She will be addressing our dealer delegates on not only Millennials and Gen Z, but all generations, in regard to key topics such as recruitment and client engagement.

Eliza is often to be found lending her expertise to the broadcast media, as well as in the mainstream press.

Service Dealer owner Duncan Murray-Clarke said, "We're delighted to have secured Eliza to attend the Service Dealer Conference as she is a speaker who is in demand on the speaking circuit around the world. She is an authority on the generations and helps businesses understand how society is changing and helps them prepare for the future.

"Connecting particularly with the next generation has never been more important. Understanding how to reach and engage with 'generation Z' is key. Learning and absorbing information is now multi-layered and



instantly available through channels of their choosing (and not just what they are told or taught). We're excited for our dealer delegates to hear what she has to say as I know it'll be of direct relevance to the running of their dealerships."

Editor of Service Dealer, Steve Gibbs, added, "If our delegates are anything like myself, they may have a grasp of what the terms Millennials, Gen Z, Gen X etc all mean, but truly knowing what the differences between them are, and how these differences might require a different approach from a business dealing with them, are much more complex issues.

"Thankfully, Eliza will be offering her expertise on how our dealer readers might think about connecting with these various societal groups. The intention is that delegates will come away with real insight which can be applied in matters such as recruiting or retaining staff – or indeed in sales situations.

"I know from many conversations I've had with dealers in recent times, how to connect with the younger generation is an area of genuine concern, particularly in terms of creating an interest in coming to work within the industry."

Eliza says one of her aims is to smash some of the misconceptions that come with speaking about the generations. She says that the types of questions she addresses include, 'Why are the over-50s dominating the Gig-economy?' 'Why do Millennials prioritise an in-work gym over an in-work pensions scheme?' or 'Why are Gen Z tech-inate but tech-skeptics?'

As well as delivering the keynote to the whole Conference, Eliza will also be running one of the popular smaller group, breakout sessions. These workshops always allow for great interactivity and a dialogue between presenter and delegate.

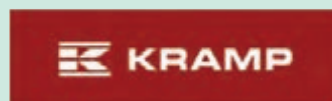
This year's *Service Dealer* Conference takes place at the DoubleTree by Hilton Oxford Belfry, on Thursday 21st November. The theme of the event is *Turning A Profit*.



For more information regarding this year's *Service Dealer* Conference & Awards, visit: [www.servicedealer.co.uk/2019-awards](http://www.servicedealer.co.uk/2019-awards)

## OUR 2019 SPONSORS

The following organisations have confirmed their sponsorship of the 2019 *Service Dealer* Conference and Awards. We'd like to welcome them on board and thank them for their support and input.



Sponsorship correct at the time of print

# THERE'S STILL TIME TO ENTER 2019'S DEALER OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

*You must be in it, to win it!*

There is still time for dealers to nominate their own businesses, to be in with a chance of winning a Dealer Of The Year award, via the *Service Dealer* website.

As well as this, a dealership can also be nominated by customers, suppliers and manufacturers. Since nominations opened, entries have been taken from dealers large and small, specialising in machinery of all types, located across the country. However, businesses are still able to put themselves forward to be in the running for national recognition.

Many factors are considered when judging the categories, but the most important is customer feedback – which will once again be acquired online, between now and October. The judging panel will meet later that month to assess entries.

As last year, the core dealer categories for the 2019 competition are:

- Garden Machinery Dealer Of The Year
- Professional Turfcare Dealer Of The Year
- Farm Machinery Dealer Of The Year
- Forestry Equipment Dealer Of The Year
- ATV/Quad Dealer Of The Year

There are also two other award categories:

- Star Of The Dealership
- Apprentice Of The Year

With these categories we want you to tell us who really goes that extra mile to help make your business a success. This is a great opportunity to nominate an employee who exceeds expectations within your business.

Visit [www.servicedealer.co.uk/nominate-2019](http://www.servicedealer.co.uk/nominate-2019) to enter.

# PREPARING FOR STAGE V

*It's been a little over 18 months since Iseki UK and Ireland launched and began building a dealer network. Editor STEVE GIBBS hears from MD David Withers about their desire to continue increasing their network coverage and machinery launches with the future in mind*

Iseki UK and Ireland, under the leadership of David Withers, has been in operation for just over a year and a half now. During that time, the company has been building its dealer network, concentrating particularly on those dealerships that have been interested in increasing their diesel offering.

"We see it as a win-win situation," says David, "as we're looking to partner with dealers who previously would have had to turn away business because they didn't have that higher bracket to offer customers who are looking for more power.

"Many dealers have their petrol portfolio filled but are lacking somewhat when it comes to diesel tractors. We're finding the dealers who've signed up with us are able to make more sales, and importantly more margin, by tapping into those customers who are looking for a product with increased power – who previously they would've had to send away."

David says he's been delighted with the company's performance since the direct branch opened. He said, "Since setting up the company in January last year, it has been very exciting to see the volume of dealers who would like to represent Iseki and support our growing sales and share gain across the sectors we serve.

"The addition of the new dealers alongside our dedicated, long-standing partners has been instrumental in driving the market share and increases in machinery sales over the last year. We wish to continue with this for many years to come."

David continues, "Our aim is that everybody should be within 30 minutes of an Iseki dealer as part of our strategy to specifically target the private home owner's who don't have the tendency to travel far when looking to purchase a new compact tractor or mower for their property."

David confirms that the company continues to have

openings for dealers in some areas throughout the UK and Ireland which are still underserved. "We would be delighted to discuss opportunities with interested parties who share our commitment to excellent customer service and relationship building," he says.

When I caught up with David, the most recently appointed dealers included Farm & Garden Machinery Ltd based in Bridgnorth, Meldrums of Fife, Hereford Mower



**Iseki UK and Ireland MD David Withers with the new Stage V compliant SF224**





# COBRA

cobragarden.co.uk

## Why Not Become a Cobra Garden Dealer Today?

With over 120 products in the Cobra range including the largest range of lawnmowers in the UK, Cobra is fast becoming a market leading brand in garden machinery. Contact us today to join the growing number of Cobra Dealers across the U.K.

### A Few Reasons to Become a Cobra Dealer:

- Increase your business and bottom line profits.
- Exclusive special offers on selected products.
- Extensive local & national Cobra marketing support.
- An evolving range of over 120 gardening products.
- No unreasonable Cobra stocking commitment.



**Kawasaki**  
ENGINES

Expertly Powered By  
**COBRA KOHLER**

#### Petrol Mowers

From Just £86.70\*



#### Chainsaws

From Just £89.90\*



#### Blower Vacs

From Just £81.40\*



#### Brushcutters

From Just £95.60\*



#### Cultivators

From Just £99.87\*



\*Stocking Dealer Price ex VAT

For information on becoming a Cobra Dealer contact Andy Marvin: 07771 581 296 or call : 0115 986 6646 today



**Iseki hopes the large storage box on the new unit will allow users to be more productive with their time**

Services based in the West of the county and Forth Grass Machinery of Dunfirmline. New dealers have been coming on board regularly over the past year, however David did stress there are gaps on their map where they would like to see more pins. The North of England was mentioned as an area which was somewhat lacking.

When I spoke to David, it was the start of the summer, just at the point when the 2019 season was proving to be somewhat of a roller-coaster for many dealers across the UK.

David said that through talking to their dealers around the UK and via their own experiences, he was of the opinion that it was turning out to be an odd kind of season.

He said, "Quarter 1 wasn't too bad, what with the warm February which saw the grass grow a bit. But then we just never really got any rain during the March period. Normally you tend to get that strong spring flush in April when the grass really grows, and that usually drives a lot of the business. Certainly for the consumer end of the market it does, where so much of that business is 'distress purchases'.

"However, we just didn't see that domestic surge of business that you usually get in May."

He also spoke about many domestic dealers carrying over a lot of unsold inventory from last year to this year, essentially because of the lack of rainfall for long periods of 2018.

"Those guys got rid of a lot of that kit during Quarter 1, but I think they've filled back up with stock again now, so we need this season to extend a little bit so that people can get rid of that stuff."

In terms of professional machinery sales though, David felt that there had not really been that same impact. He put this down to the commercial customers making more organised purchases.

"Companies have a capital budget in place," he said, "and they'll have plans to buy a new mower, or new tractor this year regardless, so we haven't seen that deflect quite as much."

In order to serve that professional market, Iseki UK is expanding its product offering – and it is doing this very much with the forthcoming Stage V engine legislation in mind.

The company has recently launched a new out-front mower featuring a new Stage V compliant 22.5hp diesel engine. It believes that with new features and market positioning, this new launch can be a potential game changer for the brand to explore further avenues.

David Withers explained, "With the engine regulations coming into place shortly, we wanted to offer the customer a competitively priced out-front mower with the same Iseki quality and reliability alongside a new Stage V compliant 22.5hp diesel engine.

"We believe the new SF224 mower offers the most economical way to cut grass commercially with high productivity plus the added benefit of the new 22.5hp engine enabling customers to save on fuel costs and initial purchasing costs of their machinery."

David continued, "Offering a range of decks to suit the various customer sites and cutting cycles, customers can choose from the Wessex, Iseki and Muthing flail decks, or the new Iseki out-front rotary deck. These options allow the machine to be highly versatile in this competitive market.

The new Iseki 60" out-front rotary deck features three blades. The cutting height can be adjusted from 25mm to 125mm in 12.5mm increments as required. A mulching kit is also available to order.

The company is also keen to stress the storage capabilities that the new machine offers users. Product Manager Richard Tyrrell said, "When developing the product, we studied how people use their mowers, quickly realising that storage was a key issue when out cutting for long periods of time.

"People were either bringing trailers with them, another vehicle, additional members of staff or tying containers onto the machines in order to carry strimmers, bin bags and other tools. With the SF224 operators can be more effective and productive with their time, taking all the equipment with them in the large storage bed on the back of the mower."

The mowers are equipped with two-pedal hydrostatic transmission and automatic or selectable 4WD. There is also a lockable differential for use when conditions demand. To ensure efficient engine cooling the radiator is fitted with an automatic reversing fan, so preventing the blockage of the grill.

With this launch David believes the company has manoeuvred itself into the right place within the market, at the right time.

"We've positioned ourselves to where the market is going," he said, "because there's no doubt, disruption is coming with Stage V."

# Don't Miss Our Incredible Autumn Deals



## **168mph (270km/h) Garden Blow Vac QGBV2500**

was: £34.99

**SSP Now: £32.99**

168mph (270km/h) Maximum Blow Speed  
Power: 2500 Watt  
Use as a vacuum or blower  
Weight: 3.7kg

## **114mph (183.6km/h) 26cc Petrol Blow Vac WEBV26**

was: £149.99

**SSP Now: £129.99**

114mph (185 km/h) Maximum air speed  
26cc Full Crank 2 Stroke Petrol Engine  
Fitted with Champion Spark Plug  
Weight: 7.05kg (Boxed)



## **50cm (20") 20V Cordless Hedge Trimmer with Battery & Charger WEV20HT**

was: £89.99

**SSP Now: £69.99**

50cm (20") double sided cutting blades  
16mm cutting capacity  
Two handed safety switch  
Weight: 2.5kg



Autumn 2019 catalogue out now



Contact Handy Distribution on 01793 333220 or your local Sales Representative for more details.

**Handy Distribution**

The Garden Equipment Wholesaler

## DO YOU NEED A DIESEL MOWER IN YOUR PRODUCT RANGE?



**CONTACT US AND APPLY TO BE A DEALER TODAY**

The ISEKI SXG range of mowers enable cutting and collecting in the wet without clogging up, ideal for the homeowner requiring the next step up in garden maintenance machinery.

ISEKI compact tractors and mowers are designed and manufactured in Japan with over 90 years experience for quality that lasts.



**ISEKI UK & IRELAND**

3-5 Foxtail Rd, Ipswich UK IP3 9RT

Telephone 01473 599266

sales@iseki.co.uk www.iseki.co.uk

# GREY SKIES AT CEREALS

*Some 16,000 visitors splashed their way through the downpours and mud of this year's Cereals event, the annual showcase for the latest developments in arable farming, including new machinery. Martin Rickatson looks back at some of the highlights*

Looking forward to harvest 2019 at June's Cereals event in Lincolnshire, there was a degree of optimism, but there was little doubt the torrential rain and continued Brexit uncertainty put a bit of a damper on things. That said, most manufacturers and importers present reported that the first six months of the year had been better than expected.

Andersons, the farm business consultants, used a press briefing at the event to suggest that, with Brexit looming over the arable sector – and this was well before Boris Johnson's election as Conservative party leader and Prime Minister – plus the strength of input costs, lack of break crop options and stagnant yield

progress, many combinable crop farms will have to make significant changes if they are to remain profitable, and therefore invest in new machinery, over the next decade.

Since 1991 the firm has been using a 'model' or imaginary farm of 600ha (1,500ac) to track the fortunes of British combinable cropping farms, based on real-life data and a cropping rotation of milling wheat, oilseed rape, feed wheat and spring beans, to illustrate the typical performance of this farm type across the UK.

"While, provided the summer weather behaves, the outlook for this typical farm should be a robust profit return from harvest 2019, the outlook longer-term is less rosy,"

warned Andersons' Richard King.

"Not only is Brexit looming over the sector, but other issues such as high costs, lack of viable break crops and stagnant yields will need addressing, and many combinable crop farms will need to make significant changes if they are to remain profitable over the next decade.

"In recent years the Loam Farm model suggests the majority of combinable crop arable farms have fared well, with respective gross margins of £810 and £802/ha over the past two years, falling to £77/ha and £61/ha once overheads, drawings, rent and finance are deducted, but rising again to £305/ha and £289/ha once the Basic Payment is factored in."



Martin Lole has set up a separate business and brand, Razorback, for his new vegetation management products

Harvest 2017 delivered robust profits from strong yields and prices and low variable costs, pointed out Mr King. Yields in 2018 were affected by the drought, and while higher prices compensated, extra costs meant returns declined slightly. For harvest 2019, while wheat and bean crop yields may return to normal, oilseed rape yields are likely to have dropped back due to establishment and pest problems. With reasonably robust crop prices, output will be up a little on 2018, but overall profitability will again be affected by input cost increases.

“Brexit uncertainties make it difficult to budget for harvest 2020, but based on prices remaining around current levels, and oilseed rape in particular recovering in performance as the key break crop, profits should remain positive. So much depends on an orderly Brexit, though – a ‘no deal’ outcome will have a sharp impact on prospects. Profitability also depends heavily on the Basic Payment. It’s still not clear how changes to domestic agricultural policy will affect things.

“Farms that efficiently produce high-yielding crops will be best placed to survive, but over the past decade yield increases have been slower than the cost of inflation, squeezing profitability.”

Against this backdrop, some torrential rain ahead of and during the show, and the continued absence of some major names in farm equipment, there was a slightly pessimistic air at Cereals 2019. Among some manufacturers, importers and dealers, as well as some visitors – agriculture’s uncertainties were being faced with commitment and positivity.

New distribution and investment agreements were a case in point. Yorkshire-based import business KRM unveiled its deal with French firm Carré, whose products were previously offered in the UK by TRP. To date, the family-owned French

firm has focused in the UK on its Prairial grassland rejuvenator, Econet inter-row weeder range and Inro strip till cultivators.

Available in 3m, 4.5m and 6m versions, the Prairial can scarify, remove moss, level and apply seed to grassland in a single pass, and will remain a key focus, as will the Econet range of inter-row hoes, said Keith Rennie of KRM.

“But we’re seeing particular interest in the Inro strip-till cultivator. This comes in two versions, one for work in oilseed rape and beet crops grown on 45-50cm rows, and one for sunflowers and maize, on 60, 75 or 80cm rows. Models from 4 to 12 rows working width are available.

“Issues with herbicide resistance and withdrawal of certain products from the market means there’s growing interest and potential in mechanical weeding, and Carré

is also continuing to work on an autonomous weeding robot. There is a wider range of Carré cultivation products available which we may look at offering to our dealers here if demand warrants it.”

Another firm announcing a recently-inked deal, also in the field of mechanical weeding, was Garford, which has sold a majority stake in its business to German combine header and field research equipment firm Zürn Harvesting. Garford’s development and production site near Peterborough will continue to be managed independently by Philip and Janet Garford, say both parties, and the current staff of 40 is being jointly expanded to meet the growing demand for hoeing technology. Garford’s dealer networks are being maintained in all major markets, and opportunities are being sought to strengthen them.



**Abrey Agricultural has extended its relationship with Ziegler beyond combine equipment to now market the firm’s cultivation machinery**



**KRM is the new importer for French firm Carré’s grassland rejuvenator, inter-row weeder range and strip-till cultivators**



John Deere is to retail its Mazzotti line of front-cab sprayers under their own livery and through a select group of JD dealers



Kuhn's Aurock triple-disc min/no-till drill, launched at February's SIMA, got its first official UK outing

"We want to jointly use our experience and resources in sales, production and development to grow Garford's hoeing technology programme," said Rolf Zürn, Managing Director of Zürn Harvesting.

"Increasing resistance problems with herbicides will open up new opportunities for mechanical weed control."

Other market changes revealed at Cereals included Mzuri drill firm founder Martin Lole's decision to set up a separate Razorback company to manufacture, sell and support his rotary hedgecutter of the same name, alongside a newly-introduced rotary mower and rake attachment for the same. Meanwhile, Abrey Agricultural announced its appointment as UK agent for

Ziegler cultivation equipment, alongside the German firm's combine header products it already sells. Key implements include the Field Profi 3m/4m tined cultivator, which can work from 8cm (3in) for stale seedbed creation to 38cm (12in) for deep restructuring, and the 3-7m Disc Master Pro compact disc.

Turning to chemical control of weeds and other crop pests, John Deere gave a UK debut at Cereals to the line of front-cabbed self-propelled sprayers it acquired with its 2017 purchase of Italian manufacturer Mazzotti.

Designed to complement Deere's front-engined self-propelled range, the new machines are set to keep their colour scheme and branding, and will be offered by a select group of JD dealers, including Cornthwaite Group, Farol, Rea Valley Tractors, Tallis Amos Group and P Tuckwell. Models shown on the stand comprised a 175hp MAF 3580 with 3,750-litre tank and 24m boom, plus a 300hp MAF 6240 with 6,600-litre capacity and 36m boom. Both feature John Deere Powertech engines and 50km/hr hydrostatic transmissions, with up to 1.7m clearance. Track adjustment can optionally be hydraulically altered from the cab. Each is compatible with the full suite of John Deere AMS precision farming systems.

Tractor news was thin on the ground, with most of the multinational makers preferring to use international shows as launchpads for new models, and some key makers – Case IH, Claas, Massey Ferguson and JCB – were absent from the event.

While it won't bring about any productivity gains, New Holland reported strong interest in its special edition 'Ford' and 'Fiat' liveries, particularly the former. Shown on a Basildon-built T6.180 tractor, it essentially comprises a white roof, blue chassis and blue wheel hubs, harking back to the livery used on the

Ford Series 40 and older tractors.

Drill news included the first UK showing of Kuhn's Aurock triple-disc min/no-till drill launched at February's SIMA. The drill's layout comprises a leading two rows of opening discs, with 460mm corrugated units for mixing or working in prepared soil, or 430mm embossed units for heavy residue conditions. Seed placement is carried out by parallelogram-mounted double-disc coulters, with alignment with the opening discs maintained by a central pivot point between the coulters and the chassis.

From Amazone, meanwhile, were new versions of the 4m and 6m Cirrus drills, the 4003-2CC and 6003-2CC, with a second distribution head and coulters system allowing

either fertiliser or a second seed type to be applied at the same time as the primary seed without coming into contact with each other. The new model features a 60:40 split 4,000-litre hopper.

Amazone also showed off a new CombiDisc 3000 for farmers on soils not requiring a PTO-driven soil tillage tool. The implement is designed to be used solo as a compact disc harrow for stubble tilling or mounted under the Centaya pneumatic drill or the Cataya conventional drill.

## A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

**10-11 June 2020:**

*Next year's Cereals takes place at Duxford, near Cambridge.*



Amazone showed new versions of the 4m and 6m Cirrus drills with a second distribution head and coulters system for fertiliser or second seed placement



New Holland reported strong interest in its special edition 'Ford' and 'Fiat' liveries, particularly the former, shown on a Basildon-built T6.180



# CONTINUING THE LEGACY

*Sharrocks, which operates two full-service depots based in the North-West and Midlands, has recently acquired the opportunity to expand its trading area into Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. Lawrence Gale Msc, MBPR, met up with fourth-generation MD, James Sharrock, to talk business, staffing and technology*

**F**R Sharrock Ltd is a family-owned and run business with over 50 years of successful trading experience with the general public, agricultural, groundcare and contract hire markets. A recent visit to its Midlands depot on the Cheshire/Staffordshire border enabled me to catch up with James Sharrock, MD and Steve Hanlon, Groundcare Sales Director.

The company has two full-service depots and several regional service points which

it utilises to effectively cover its recently expanded sales and support network across Yorkshire, Derbyshire and parts of Nottinghamshire, as well as its original heartlands of Lancashire, Cheshire and Shropshire.

With over 50 staff and expanding, it is now one of the biggest dealerships in the country. The company prides itself on its aftersales services and the fact that it has one of the widest ranges of products (some 40 plus manufacturers) on offer.

**Service Dealer:** When did the company start?

**James Sharrock:** The current business was incorporated in 1958 but we have essentially been trading since the late 1930s. I am the fourth generation Sharrock to be involved in the running of the company. Previously the reins of the company fell to my father Keith, grandfather Francis and great grandfather James, a blacksmith who started the company in the early 1930s, serving the local farmers.



**SD: What is your role in the company?**

**JS:** I'm the Managing Director, which means I generally take care of all the day-to-day management of the company, overseeing the major decisions. Being a family-run business, I cut my teeth working in the parts and servicing department. This enabled me to have a greater understanding of the business and for me it is one of the most important aspects of our company. The ability to serve our customers quickly and efficiently is key to maintaining and growing our customer base.

I work closely with Steve Hanlon, our Sales Director (Groundcare). Steve's role is primarily to run this depot and oversee all the operations that come with selling, repairing and servicing machinery. As Steve says, he's often working long days to fulfil the customer's needs.

**SD: What products do you stock and sell in your stores?**

**JS:** Working with 40 plus manufacturers, we have one of the largest range of products on sale. We're very pleased to be working with the likes of Ransomes, Jacobsen, Iseki, Case IH, Etesia, Pellenc, Wessex, Ferris, Wright, Jensen, Trilo, Spider, Ventrac, Muthing, Cushman, EZGO, Husqvarna, STIHL, Allett and Amazone, to name a few.

**SD: What sort of customer base are you serving with that range of products?**

**JS:** Our core customers are centred around commercial clients such as local authorities, pro-am sports facilities – including football, rugby, and golf –, contractors, utilities, government agencies, civils, estates and educational establishments. We



Iseki tractors in the showroom

also serve arable, dairy and turf farmers, as well as smallholders and large domestic properties.

We have over the last few years reduced our capacity for dealing with most of the general domestic customers. We find those guys are now largely buying from the likes of B&Q, garden centres and online. We are happy having enough to contend with, serving our existing customers.

Over the years we have developed a different way of working with our larger clients, particularly local authorities. These are now a much more complex customer to deal with due to their procurement departments.

Selling machinery to this market requires a different skill set and we're lucky to have built up strong relationships with many large local authorities and contractors. This has resulted in sales of large fleets of equipment and machinery. We're often called in to offer our advice on what appropriate machinery will cater to their needs.

**SD: How has business been in recent times for you?**

**JS:** The Groundcare division had its best year ever in 2018, breaking through the £10m barrier for the first time with a healthy margin carried across all sectors. Despite an on/off start this year we are now back on track with our forecast which will see us build on 2018.

With more and more local authorities changing their grass cutting regimes, often reducing their grass cutting frequencies, there is a need for more flail and rotary-type machines that can cope with longer grass crops.

We've also seen a rise in the sale of robotic and remote-controlled mowing systems, such as the Spider, to cope with banks and sloped terrains, especially with Health and Safety legislation driving safer working practices.

Our hire fleet is staggering. We have a retail value



STIHL products on display

of over five million pounds worth of machinery and equipment on hire, making it one of the biggest growth areas for our business. We're finding that more and more businesses, particularly local authorities, are moving into the hiring of machinery and equipment.

**SD: Is demo-ing machinery an important part of your sales process?**

**JS:** Yes, we see it as essential to the way we do business. We run a demo fleet with a retail value in excess of half a million pounds, which is replaced on an 18-month cycle. A large part of our business is advising clients of the right machines for the job – therefore demonstrating a range of machinery is a key part of our sales strategy.

**SD: And in terms of promoting and marketing the business, how do you go about that?**

**JS:** As mentioned, we demonstrate machinery regularly, including focused roadshows. In addition, we advertise in the usual outlets and take stand space at the better regional shows.

We still have a very strong focus on direct contact via our sales and service teams, along with digital direct marketing. We invest heavily in digital presence with a modern website for information purposes and then another site dedicated to used machinery – SharrocksTrader.com.

We are, however, increasingly seeing the importance of social media. We're now focusing a significant portion of our time on the usual channels, updating customers and followers on deliveries,

demonstrations, service tips, webinars etc.

**SD: What are your staffing levels like?**

**JS:** Like most businesses, our staff are our most vital assets. We have around 50 staff working at the two depots and six service centres, with 15 working in the parts department and 30 directed to sales and servicing, with the remainder as office and support staff.

We pride ourselves on having one of the largest range of agricultural and amenity spare parts and accessories in the country and have teamed up with Kramp so that customers can order by 6pm for next-day delivery direct to their farm – or they can collect free of charge from their local depot. To help facilitate this vast range of spares, we require five full-time service vans on the road to ensure our customers get a quick turnaround on spares and repairs.

The company also supplies workshop tools and sundries, as well as a variety of miscellaneous items such as sheep netting, brooms, buckets, rakes and much more.

**SD: You must need to keep all your staff fully trained?**

**JS:** Training is critically important. We invest heavily in manufacturer training with at least a quarter of the workforce attending at least one manufacturer-run course per annum. We also cross train in departments. Just recently, for example, two of our parts team attended a Case IH basic sales training course. This significantly helps in product knowledge within different departments.

We also cross purpose staff. For instance, most members of the sales and service team are certified



James Sharrock with Steve Hanlon, sales director and depot manager



The Workshop

# TAKE YOUR BUSINESS TO THE NEXT LEVEL WITH ASPEN ALKYLATE PETROL

THE ORIGINAL AND #1 SELLING  
ALKYLATE PETROL SINCE 1988

## EXPERT ADVICE

From production to  
combustion. Expert  
technical and sales  
support from the brand  
that specialises in fuel



## BRAND NEUTRAL

Give your customers  
a fuel solution for all  
of their equipment no  
matter what brand

WWW.ASPENFUEL.CO.UK - 01929 551557 (EXT 2) - ASPEN@AAOIL.CO.UK

## Contact us today and arrange a consultation meeting with your area sales manager

# Masport®

www.masportmowers.co.uk

## CONTRACTOR 21"



- Briggs & Stratton Pro 850EX OHV 190cc
- Double ball bearing aluminum wheels
- Quickcut™ swing tip blade
- Heavy duty bar & controls
- 2-year commercial warranty
- 3-speed gearbox
- Bumper bar



RRP **£899.00** inc. VAT



Distributed by FGM Claymore  
01 789 490177  
info@fgmclaymore.co.uk

machine installers, possessing trailer licences and digital tacho cards. We also invest in Health and Safety training with several first aiders at each location with infrastructure in place such as defibrillators. We also keep modern and well-maintained workshops, service centres and parts departments, as well as our vehicle fleet and service tools.

**SD: Do you find it useful to attend trade shows and exhibitions?**

**JS:** Yes, we attend Saltex, Sima, GIS and BTME. We wanted to get to Demopark this year, but we were just too busy. It will be on the cards for 2021 though. We believe it's important that we keep in touch with all our clientele at all times. Attending the shows give us the opportunity to meet a large amount of existing and potential new customers under one roof.

**SD: What new technologies do you see having an impact on the industry?**

**JS:** In terms of new tech, the automation of mowers combined with battery power has to be the big one. Imagine the savings that could be achieved in a commercial setting from mowers that charge fuel cells in the day and mow at night! We already have it to a degree in gardens but with the GPS and Geolocking that is already in the market, we can't be more than a few years away. We already have fully autonomous

tractors from Case IH working in the US and Harper Adams has been working in conjunction with Iseki on a retrofit system to compact tractors.

We're seeing a growing trend in the use of battery and robotic mowing technologies. As I say, it won't be long before highway agencies and local authorities start fully embracing this technology to cut road verges and central reservations, cutting at times when the roads are quiet or at night, with the aim to be more efficient and more safety conscious.

As it stands at the moment though, most of the robotic mowers we offer for sale are aimed at the domestic market. Once manufacturers have a comprehensive mapping solution, then I believe this market will rise rapidly. The technologies already exist in other sectors, it is just a case of bringing them together.

**SD: Do you think the new emission legislations will have much impact on your business?**

**JS:** I'm sure Stage V will have a huge impact on the industry in the coming years. We will all have to comply, however like all new initiatives we will have to adapt to survive. No doubt several smaller companies will face difficult times or indeed close.

**SD: What are your thoughts regarding online selling?**

**JS:** Like any route to market, it has its place. I will never be convinced that the box selling of petrol



The Parts department



Cub Cadets in store

engines is a good idea, especially if you can't back that product up. There have been many comments on a major supplier's recent relaxation of T&C's in this area. I feel this is just a continued step in bringing a direct route to the market. In the short term, as sales of petrol engines wane in favour of electric, you can understand the logic; however, when your success has relied heavily on the commitment of a dealer network, I believe it is a significant long-term gamble.

**SD: How do you see the future for your business?**

**JS:** Busy, very busy! Having just expanded our trading area to cover Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire, we will no doubt be very busy in the coming years. We've already delivered large contracts to Barnsley Council, Rotherham Council, Derbyshire City and County Councils, Nottingham City Council and the University of Nottingham.

Again, sales in battery-powered equipment are growing, along with the development of autonomous vehicles, therefore there will be a lot of new opportunities for further sales and demonstrations.

**SD: Thank you.**

**NEW T6.160**  
**ELECTRO COMMAND™**

---

**SIX APPEAL**

**ENJOY VERSATILITY, RELIABILITY AND EXCLUSIVITY WITH THE ONE AND ONLY 6-CYLINDER ENGINE IN ITS POWER SEGMENT.**

- Proudly made in Basildon, the home of iconic 6 cylinder models
- 164 HP maximum horsepower with Engine Power Management
- NEF 6-cylinder 6.7 litre engine provides 12% more torque for greater pull-away capabilities and engine lugging.
- 50% higher engine braking in downhill operations. Exhaust Brake option provides an additional +24% Engine Braking.

**NEW HOLLAND TOP SERVICE 00800 64 111 111** 24/7 SUPPORT AND INFORMATION.  
The call is free from a land line. Check in advance with your Mobile Operator if you will be charged.

[www.newholland.com](https://www.newholland.com)

**NEW HOLLAND**  
AGRICULTURE

btsadv.com

New Holland prefers **AVISTA** Lubricants



# EXPANDING EASTWARDS

*It takes serious commitment to run a family dealership selling and supporting farm, turf or garden equipment. Expanding to open a second branch, though, takes a whole lot more of it. Martin Rickatson visits Bedfordshire ATV specialist MKM Agriculture's new Suffolk depot*

**E**xpanding a single-branch business to include a second depot in a new area is no small undertaking, with new premises to find, staff to take on, whologoods and parts stocks to invest in and, above all, a reputation to create. That's the task that faced established Bedfordshire ATV dealer MKM Agriculture last year when Managing Director Anthony Deacon was offered the chance to expand his family's business into Suffolk by taking on the Honda franchise for the area, following a change of ownership and refocusing of the business of Fieldens, the former Honda ATV dealer.

Anthony's father, Mark, founded MKM in 1986 in a converted pig shed on his father's farm in Marston Moreteyne, between Bedford and Milton Keynes, and continues to oversee the agricultural machinery servicing, fabrication and machinery collections and deliveries side of MKM Agriculture. While the company had some history in previously selling new farm equipment such as Valmet tractors, it has been Mark's son, Anthony – who joined the company from school – who has overseen the development of the ATV/UTV business that has become the largest element of MKM Agriculture.

"Coming from a farming background, it came naturally to me to understand the wants and needs of our local farmers," explains Mark.

"Before starting MKM with two friends in 1987, I worked for some excellent agricultural engineering companies and was fortunate enough to work alongside some fantastic people, and learnt a lot about the industry.

"One of the most important lessons was that, while it's important to sell good quality machinery, it's equally as important to provide outstanding aftersales service."

Until 1991, MKM's business primarily dealt with the repair of local tractors and the supply of secondhand models. That year, the firm was offered the Valmet (now Valtra) tractor franchise, and sold a number of units until 1998, when changes within Valmet's distributorship saw the agreement dissolved. Service and secondhand supply continued to be the core of the business, though, and in 2000 Mark moved MKM into a larger, purpose-

built building with workshop, parts storage, office and showroom space.

The next major step came two years later, when MKM was approached by Suzuki to sell its ATVs.

"After careful consideration, we decided it was the right time and product for us to promote, and in April 2003 we took delivery of our first Suzuki ATVs," recalls Anthony.

"We hit the ground running and were well into double-figure sales in the first 12 months. In 2006 we took on Suzuki's ATVs for leisure and children. We also began selling the LT-Z400 and LT-R450 race models and took charge of the Suzuki GB ATV racing team, where we competed and won titles across the UK and Europe. In 2007 we were given Suzuki's ATV Dealer of the Year award. Demand for ATVs and associated equipment continued to grow, and we concentrated on providing top-class service to the many industries requiring them."

In 2010 the business was appointed a dealer for JCB's entry into UTVs, the Workmax, and the product proved a strong seller. Four years later, though, JCB decided to withdraw from the market, but MKM continues to service and support the vehicles.

In 2013, a second ATV franchise was added to the MKM portfolio, when the firm was approached by Yamaha Motor Europe to take on the Yamaha ATV franchise.

# “IT'S IMPORTANT TO BE ABLE TO DISPLAY A WIDE RANGE OF MACHINES TO HELP CUSTOMERS MAKE THE CORRECT CHOICE”

"The existing local dealer, Frank Cook, was retiring after many years success with Yamaha, and we were pleased both parties considered us the right people to continue this", recalls Anthony.

"In 2015, we signed our third ATV/UTV franchise deal, this time with Kawasaki, as dealers for its Mule UTVs. The UTV market was a huge part of our business, and with the end of the JCB WorkMax we were approached by a range of UTV manufacturers, but chose Kawasaki partly because of our familiarity in dealing with Japanese-based companies, having always been pleased with their support, quality and partly because the Mule is a good, well-established product."

MKM completed its line-up of 'big four' ATV franchises when, in 2016, it was approached by Honda and asked to represent it in Bedfordshire and the surrounding area.

"Honda understood the importance of ATVs being sold through specialist ATV dealers, in order to provide the sort of customer service the end user deserves. After serious consultations with Suzuki, Yamaha and Kawasaki, we decided it was the correct business decision for us and our customers to also take on Honda, they are UK ATV market leaders, and have been producing quality, reliable machines for many years. We became the only UK company to be able to offer all four of the leading Japanese brands from under one roof."

Just as it had done 18 years previously, the growth of the business necessitated further site development, leading to the construction in 2017 of a new workshop and new showroom.

"The introduction of Honda meant we had a larger range in our product line-up," says Anthony.

"It's important to be able to display a wide range of machines to help customers make the correct choice, so we needed a larger showroom. With the workshop moving out we removed the dividing wall in our main building and created what is possibly the largest specialist ATV showroom



ATV sales have been running well since the branch's March opening, and MKM has recently been appointed a Honda lawn and garden dealer



Former Fieldens man Keith Collins (right) is managing MKM Agriculture's new Suffolk branch for MD Anthony Deacon (left)

in the UK, from which we're retailing over 150 units annually – including both work and leisure ATVs – plus 100 used machines."

It was late last year when the company was offered the chance to expand into new territory. With the restructuring of former Suffolk Honda dealer Fieldens, which refocused its business on its agricultural wheel and tyre division, the opportunity arose to open a specialist Honda branch in the Suffolk area.

"We were fortunate to be awarded the dealership by Honda in recognition of our success we've had with the marque from our Bedfordshire headquarters," acknowledges Anthony.

"We were also fortunate to sign some of the former Fieldens staff, including Keith Collins as Branch Manager, but we had to start from scratch in other areas, including finding premises. There was an area where the dealership needed to be, and I was keen to be based on a farm so we could use surrounding tracks and fields for demonstrations.

"We found a suitable building to

rent at Ixworth Thorpe, near Bury St Edmunds, but when I first came to look in September it was being used as a feed store by a gamekeeper. Since moving on 1st March we have transformed the interior of the building, creating a showroom and office out front and workshops at the rear."

The MKM model at its Bedfordshire HQ, selling all four major brands and being the only ATV dealer in the UK to do so, is an interesting one when compared with the demands of agricultural tractor manufacturers for franchise exclusivity.

"The way we got here was probably the only way it could have been done," says Anthony.

"Many other ATV retailers are general agricultural equipment dealers who have an ATV franchise alongside many other types of machine. We're an ATV specialist, and I think manufacturers recognise that it's specialist dealers that really succeed with ATVs. We know the market and the requirements of the customers, and that's what makes it work. The makers realise customers

are better off coming to a specialist ATV dealer that sells multiple makes than a general dealer of many types of agricultural machinery that sells one on the side.

So how does it work in practice?

"Each make has its own particular qualities and features. When a customer comes and says 'I need an ATV' we start by talking to them about their needs and requirements, and gradually whittle the 40 or so models we offer across all makes down to a handful. Then we talk through the features of each one and get down to two or three, after which it's a case of talking through the pros and cons of how they like the feel and features of each machine.

"At Bedford, I think we get two types of customer through our doors – those that want a Honda and those that want an ATV generally. With 53% market share, Honda ATVs almost sell themselves, but the others all have their advantages.

"Some customers are less brand loyal and will look at other makes if we have attractive offers such as 0% finance or additional discounts."



In Suffolk, MKM sells only Honda, but there is already a good market for trade-ins of all makes, with few spending much time at the depot, says Keith Collins.

"There's almost an order booked already when something comes in, with trade-ins through the workshop, prepped, serviced and out the door to new owners very quickly. With another depot in a new area, we also have more scope for both incoming and outgoing used machines.

"We're also selling lines of complementary ATV equipment, including various implements and accessories from Wessex and Logic, plus CLH Trailers, Enduramaxx sprayers and a range of gamekeeping equipment.

"I think we have good market prospects, with an established Honda base through the previous dealer, established markets including livestock and arable farms, estates and gamekeepers, and high-profile customers such as the Sandringham Estate and the RSPB.

"We've also got new buyers to attract – there are plenty of

smallholdings and equestrian yards around here with money to spend. On anything from one acre to 20, where a garden tractor won't do enough and an agricultural tractor is too big, then an ATV can do most things a tractor can."

Most recently, MKM has announced its appointment as a Honda lawn and garden equipment dealer at the new Suffolk branch,

its first move into domestic grass machinery. With good road frontage to the premises to attract passing trade, a distinct lawn and garden area has been created in the showroom.

"But ATVs remain our core focus," says Anthony.

"I'd like to think we can do at least 30 new ATVs from our new branch this year, and possibly up to 50."



Service support technicians are fully equipped for mobile service where necessary



Comprehensive workshop facilities have been developed at the rear of the newly-converted premises

# BUSINESS MONITOR

SPONSORED BY CATALYST COMPUTER SYSTEMS



## MIXED BAG OF BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

*Respondents tell us of changing attitudes over the past year*

Going on the results of our most recent survey, which asked our dealer readers about their confidence levels for their businesses moving forward, a mixed bag emerged – which going by the state of flux which the country was in when we canvassed, is hardly surprising.

Last year, a small majority of respondents (56%) when asked how they were feeling said they were either 'confident' or 'very confident' – this year dealers responding in a similar way has slipped slightly to 44%. The most popular response this year was for dealers to say they had neutral feelings – neither confident nor not.

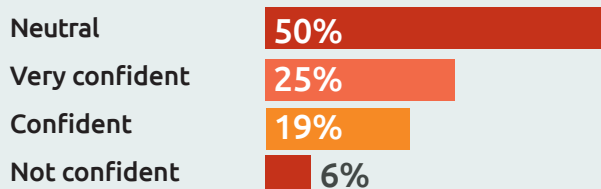
What is quite interesting is that a large majority of respondents said their feelings of confidence had changed over this past 12 months; 44% said their confidence had been changed absolutely and 38% said it had partly changed.

Questions regarding confidence indicators such as recruiting new staff, changing premises or taking on new franchises all indicated a cautious approach is currently being undertaken by most.

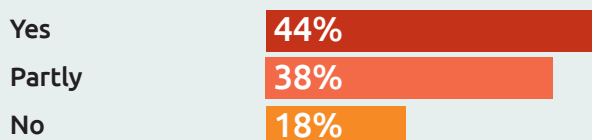
Most respondents answered in the negative as to whether they were thinking of taking on new employees (44%), altering their place of business in some way (50%), or mixing up their franchise offering (62%).

When it came to be thinking about which products to stock, as before, the most popular answer was 'reliability of product' at 50% – and the best way to find customers to buy these products off you is still regarded as 'word of mouth' at 47%.

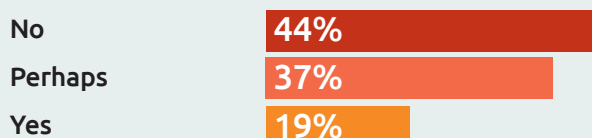
### How confident are you for your business's prospects for the rest of the year?



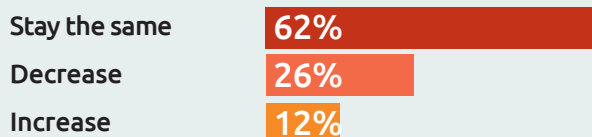
### Has your level of business confidence changed over the past 12 months?



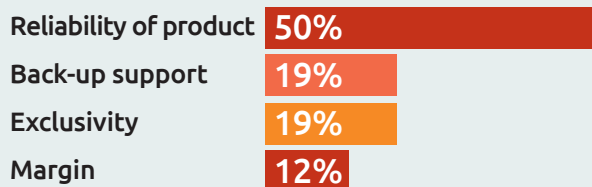
### Are you considering taking on more staff in the next 12 months?



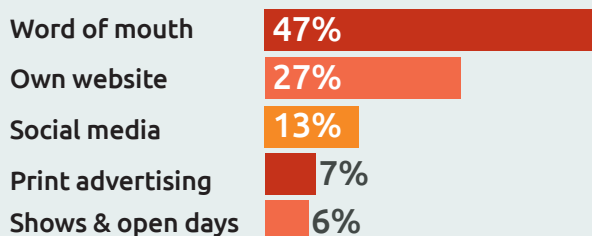
### Do you plan to change the number of franchises you hold over the next 12 months?



### Which factor most influences your choice of franchises to stock?



### What method do find most effective for attracting new customers to your business?





# YOUR SAY

**We asked you, considering some have described this season so far as a 'rollercoaster' and with the uncertainty of Brexit looming, how are you feeling about your business currently and going forward?**

- This season has been very much a rollercoaster for us sales wise, although service has remained steady. This coupled together with the looming Brexit scenario, increases in our overheads both rent and wage wise, plus pressures from internet discounters who are reducing our sales margins continually, means there is not too much cause for cheer. Customers who are used to next-day internet sales also seem to increasingly make the same demands from us. Parts/Machines/Service all need to be supplied yesterday, especially in peak season and with the dreadful Briggs parts supply problems this year it has led to several customer confrontations which although not perhaps major in value wise, lead to myself and staff being berated by customers for problems which are not of our making on a daily basis, which reduces morale and generally makes us more negative in our outlook.
- The future doesn't look great. What with the general economic uncertainty that seems to be depressing spending, the internet killing our industry and more and more cordless equipment being sold which has little or no after sales, it's not looking great. It is starting to feel very much like we are going the way of the white goods industry.
- There are always challenges to overcome. It's all about having the serenity to accept those things that are out of our control and the courage to change the things we can control, no matter what the weather or the economy throws at us. We will do what is necessary.
- 2018 was rubbish because of the hot weather. 2019 is almost as bad, but I don't know why. Seems every local business in whatever trade is having problems getting people to spend. Business is still profitable, but it's lacking the 'buzz' you get when its busy. Didn't think we would have two bad years in a row, but it's looking like it unless we get a crazy autumn spending spree.
- As *Service Dealer* put it, it's been a rollercoaster of a year. We have had more sales this year but the issue we face is rising costs of rent, vehicle running costs and rates. This has had to be equated into costing of servicing, which is sometimes, but not always, accepted by customers as the machine they purchased only cost the service price when new. The main issue at the moment is that customers are being cautious on spending due to Brexit. What's not helping is the constant arrangements in parliament and changing prime ministers. It's not just affecting us as an industry, it's affecting other businesses as well, including car dealers. Even our representatives from suppliers have had hardly any phone calls this year.
- There will be a hiccup if Brexit happens for a few months and then it will build back up.
- If it keeps raining, business will be good. We had a regional show recently which has brought in a lot of trade.

**CATALYST**  
COMPUTER SYSTEMS

**Dealer Management Software**  
For the Agricultural and Horticultural Trades

Machinery Stocking & Sales | Accounts & MTD  
Workshop | Shop Sales & Stock Control  
Parts & Price Files | Management Reporting  
Booking & Hire | Remote Working  
Free Web Advertising | E-Commerce  
Automated Customer Reminders

Unveil your machinery stock to the world with Catalyst Findit!

**Findit**  
www.catalyst-findit.com

"Since installing Catalyst's software to handle our stock control and customer invoicing we have found it to be a very efficient and cost effective alternative to the 'industry standard' software we were previously running" - A and M Engineering

Tel - 0116 230 1500    Web - [www.catalyst-uk.com](http://www.catalyst-uk.com)    Email - [sales@catalyst-uk.com](mailto:sales@catalyst-uk.com)

# MIGHTY OAKES DO GROW

*Just a few short years from their double centenary, Oakes Bros. Ltd. continues to look to the future with extensive plans for recruitment, expansion and diversification. Managing Director, Richard Haines, talks to editor STEVE GIBBS about their ambitions*



**E**stablished in 1825, there can't be too many agricultural dealerships in the UK with a heritage that stretches back further than Oakes Bros. which is very close to celebrating its 200th anniversary in business.

From humble roots, the business today serves farming communities across Berkshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire, Surrey, West Sussex and Wiltshire. Operating from four separate depots, 2019 has seen significant change within the Group with Richard Haines stepping up from the position of Business Development Director, which he held for six years, to take over as Managing Director from Edmund Lindley, who took retirement after 19 successful years at the helm.

A graduate of Harper Adams University, Richard joined the company in 2013. He originates from the Wantage area in Oxon, and has strong family ties with Oakes Bros. going back over half a century. Throughout his career, Richard has worked in several key positions within Commercial Sales & Marketing departments in both UK and European positions.

Richard told me about Oakes Bros.' ambitions for

the future. He explained, "As well as carrying out my duties as MD, I'm keen to focus on various aspects of business development as well as driving the Parts and Service side of the business. We've got some very good teams across each of our departments and it's very important that our people develop and grow. So, one of the things that I'm keen to introduce as part of our development plans are programmes that develop individuals further, because they need to feel empowered and take ownership of their part of the business."

Richard added, "This is, of course, going to be a huge undertaking and will require small, incremental steps."

## Recruiting and retaining

To achieve these goals as well as training current staff members, new people will have to be brought into the company. Richard is well aware of the challenges faced by agricultural dealerships around the country in finding the right candidates.

"It's not easy," he says, when asked how they will go about finding these new staff members. "I think you now have to look at how you appeal to the younger



**Oakes Bros. Managing Director, Richard Haines, pictured at the Micheldever depot**

generation and why putting an advert in the trade press or the local paper isn't enough anymore.

"There needs to be a lot of interaction around advertised roles with social media activity being particularly important. If you look at Oakes Bros.' Facebook page, we work really hard on that. It's not a sales tool as such, it's an awareness tool for our brand and all our activities. It's important that we're creating a constant chatter around what we're up to and what our vacancies are. Once you do that, you begin to get that word-of-mouth spreading.

"For example, we've recently employed a young lad called Jordan Griffen as Group Sales Demonstrator and he's hit the ground running. He's come straight off a farm, a big New Holland fan, looking for a fresh challenge. He wants to become an Area Sales Manager in the future, so for him to come in as a Sales Demonstrator is absolutely the way to do it. He found out about us through social media and got in touch with one of our current Area Sales Managers who'd sold to the farm he used to work on - which is a reflection of how things are working these days."

At the time I visited Oakes Bros., the only technician

vacancy available across all their branches was at Coombe Bissett near Salisbury. Richard explained that this is a consequence of how much faith they have put into the apprentice plan which they have in place and serves as a blueprint of how to feed their workshops in the future.

Richard believes that employing skilled technicians who understand this trade is very difficult.

"They're very few and far between," he says. "In fact, I'd argue it's very difficult. What you've got to do is push really hard with the development of new talent. For every department, but certainly workshops and sales, you need to be constantly developing your own prospects."

I ask Richard at what age should dealers be reaching this new talent, is it fresh out of school and college?

"For apprentices ideally 16, straight out of school," he says. "If they've then had one or two years at a local agricultural college, which for us around here would be Sparsholt College, that's great because it means they'll have some underpinning knowledge. We can then feed them straight into the apprenticeship route and then onto either a New Holland or a JCB apprenticeship."



MD Richard Haines with groundscre machinery



Oakes Bros. benefit from plenty of workshop space across their depots

To get themselves on potential young recruits' radars, Oakes Bros. regularly lay on events to make connections with the local educational establishments.

"With Sparsholt for example," explains Richard, "we've had all their Level 1 and Level 2 students visit a combine harvester afternoon event that we hosted recently. Both parties benefit from an event like this. The college can give their students access to the latest combine technology which they wouldn't be able to afford otherwise while, from our perspective, we can make those guys aware of what we're up to from a branding perspective.

"Importantly, we're making good connections and getting them onto our social channels. As a testament to how successful these connections can be, we've got technicians in the workshop at the moment who are ex-Sparsholt – and that's something which I've identified as holding even more potential for the future."

Oakes Bros. are fully aware though, that making that initial appointment is only half the battle. Retaining staff for the long-term is where an even greater challenge lies.

"You have to work smart at retention," believes Richard. "You've got to make sure that if you talk to young people about a development plan and a training plan, that you actually implement it.

"For example, we're currently talking to one young lad who has joined the business and who's made it clear from day one that he wants to become a specialist in New Holland's PLM smart farming system. Now we know that, we need to make sure that when we employ him, we have a robust training plan in place that enables him to fulfil his ambitions. If we don't do that and we get side-tracked, we're at risk of losing him.

"Of course, we need to expect our staff to be diverse in what they do – however, if they want to specialise,

then we need to listen. We must find ways to make that work for them. By accommodating staff, that's what builds up our team and its strengths."

## Diversification plans

Oakes Bros. currently has four depots that all specialise in serving their local agricultural communities. Over the coming years, they will continue to develop with both expansion and diversification plans on the company's agenda.

The plan initially, says Richard, is to grow the agricultural machinery business further within its current area. "Do that and do it better," is how he puts it. Then the aim will be to expand geographically.

"Long term we must do that to make sure we maintain market share," Richard says. "Machinery is getting bigger with a greater emphasis on technology and data. Smaller farmers continue to consolidate or use contractors, therefore we're going to have to grow our area to be sustainable. But coupled alongside that, once we've developed our people and our teams, we then want to diversify the Oakes Bros. group offering.

"We're an agricultural engineering company and we've been serving agriculture since 1825. You will, however, see us develop a commercial groundscre business as well as a construction business alongside our core ag offering."

Oakes Bros. already has the sites in place to accommodate this diversification into new machinery areas, all with large yards and workshop capacities. "We just need the franchises and the teams to enable us to take that business forward," Richard explains. "But that's all about timing. The most important thing right now is the core agricultural business because it underpins everything we do. Once we've got that right and it meets our expectations, we can begin to develop those other areas."

I ask Richard if domestic machinery could also be in the plans and he says he'd absolutely love to. "If you go to our Horsham site for example," he says, "we're right on the main road. It's such a superb location, it would be a cracking place to do it. But that would have to come in time."

Asked if these plans require more than the current four depots, Richard replies that in terms of the groundscare and construction plans, they don't need to expand geographically because they can sell into their current trading areas which aren't served with these products at the moment. However, agriculturally speaking, there will most definitely be a requirement for growth.

Regarding franchises, Oakes Bros. is currently a main dealer for New Holland and JCB Agriculture. When they diversify into new sectors, I ask if that will mean sticking with the groundscare offerings from these companies or looking elsewhere for new manufacturers to represent.

a couple of proposals that are very interesting, "At the moment we just want to focus on what we've got," he explains. "However, give us a bit of time and we could be interested, so we'll have to wait and see."

## Marketing the business

Like everyone, Oakes Bros. will admit that the market has been somewhat challenging in recent times.

"I won't say it's truly a buyers' market," Richard says, "but one thing I've noticed is that buyers are certainly pushing harder. If you talk to farmers and contractors, they're asking the question: 'Am I getting the right deal?'"

I wonder if this pushing for extra flexibility on price by buyers is exacerbated by the on-going Brexit situation?

"Let's be clear, Brexit does create uncertainty," states Richard, "and in uncertain times you'd much rather leave your money in your wallet than spend it. What we have noticed though is that businesses that are very professionally run and are focussed on farming with

# “ONE THING WHICH WE MUST NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF IS THAT PEOPLE WANT TO BE SOLD TO”

"That's an interesting question," says Richard. "New Holland has a great range of tractors, but we don't have a complete groundscare line-up from it. So, we'll require franchises that are looking for a long-term partnership to help us develop our groundscare proposition."

Richard says that if they were to take on a franchise with a manufacturer that they currently have no relationship with, they would need to align closely with Oakes Bros.' values.

They would also need a partner who is going to take a very long-term view on business.

"If you look at the relationship between Oakes Bros. and New Holland and JCB," Richard explains, "they go back an awfully long way. We don't have many franchises. The franchises we have, we need to work with through thick and thin and be in it together for the long haul."

Richard doesn't give anything away in terms of where the company might look for any new machinery providers, but does say that since he's joined they've had

long-term replacement plans, are continuing to invest as normal. They have to, because if they're doing 4,000 - 5,000 hours on their tractors for example, they must stick to the replacement cycle in order to reduce long-term running costs."

In order to keep customers coming through their gates though, Oakes Bros. realises the importance of marketing - albeit very targeted marketing to its core demographic.

"We have to use social platforms," Richard says. "Particularly Facebook which works well for us. I think it's extraordinary how you can post something and then have thousands of views within just a few hours. What you don't always know, of course, is how much good that engagement is doing from a purely sales perspective.

However, what's really important is that it's keeping our brand out there and therefore improving consideration rates."

The company puts out a mailing piece once a month which goes to all its account customers. This printed

copy is sent out with statements while they also keep a digital mailing list from which they email an electronic version. Richard says if they've got special offers and such like they include those in the publication.

"However, we're trying to make it a little more content-heavy. We'll include info about special events, Open Days, or if it's a particular time of year, we'll get customers thinking about what they might need. It's a really important document for us."

The dealership does in fact engage with a whole raft of marketing activities which include events or support for local customers with shows as examples.

"In our core agricultural market," believes Richard, "you have to be in and amongst it with supporting the industry and supporting local agricultural events."

"One thing which we must never lose sight of," he continues, "is that people want to be sold to. They want to know that we're here for their machinery needs. They want to know that we're in business and that we are professional and that we want to be considered for their next machine."

"Shows are invaluable for this. Supporting Young Farmer events, supporting agricultural colleges, doing bespoke days like tillage events or combine training evenings - engaging with customers in those scenarios is so important."

In all these types of events, the value for Oakes Bros. lies in getting their name out there amongst their communities, nurturing customer relationships and

vitality, generating leads for potential new business. As Richard says, "If you hold an Open Day and you get half a dozen new people turn up who want to talk business with you, that's a sign of success."

## Ambitious plans

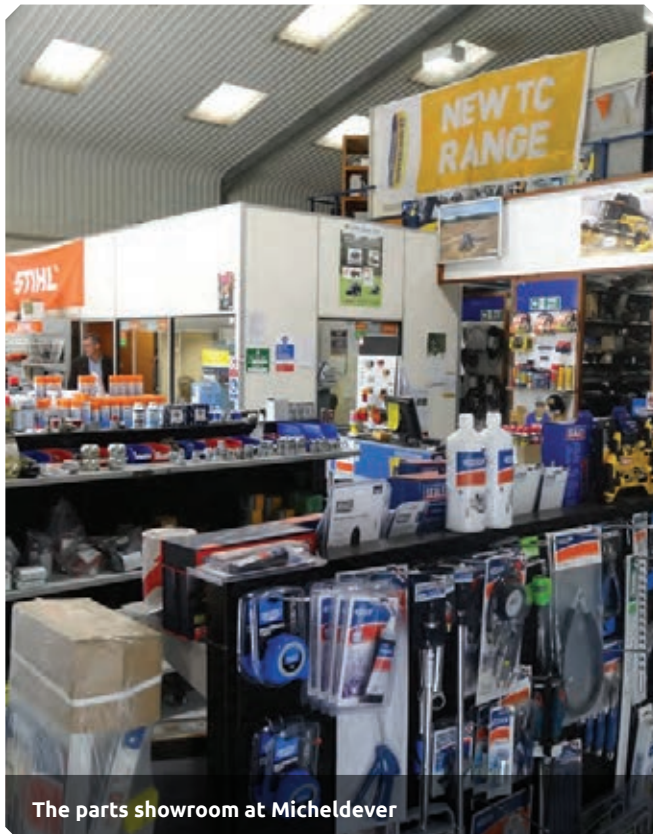
Before they get too far ahead of themselves, the key for Oakes Bros. right now, says Richard, is the development of the agricultural side of the business to exactly where they want it to be.

"We have some employing to do," he says. "We've just taken on a Sales Demonstrator. We'd like to employ one if not two Sales Trainees. They would ideally be young people who have an agricultural-type background and who aspire to be an Area Sales Manager of the future."

If we can get people like that into the business now, they will not only get to understand our systems and processes, but they will be there to help with additional sales as and when the business grows and diversifies."

Bolstering the team is important, as the next step for Oakes Bros. is for this new regime to increase the company turnover and see it through the 200-year anniversary and beyond.

And what appears encouraging from the business's point of view, is that overwhelmingly, everybody involved is on board and supportive of these ambitions. Not for the first time during my visit, the phrase 'mighty oaks' springs to mind.



The parts showroom at Micheldever



One of the newly liveried vans



**gardencare**  
your pathway to a beautiful garden

**CHAINSAWS**  
**BUILT FOR PERFORMANCE**

Find out more at...  
**cyriljohnstontrade.co.uk**

**LST65558**  
**LOGSPLITTER**

**SAFETY CAGE INCLUDED**  
**5T SPLITTING FORCE**  
**2200W ENGINE**  
**45KG WEIGHT**

**Central**  
Distributed by  
Central Spares  
throughout  
mainland UK

**CS3800**  
37.2CC ENGINE  
4.7KG DRY WEIGHT  
35CM CUT LENGTH  
EASYSTART RECOIL

**CS4100**  
40.1CC ENGINE  
4.7KG DRY WEIGHT  
40CM CUT LENGTH  
EASYSTART RECOIL

**CS5000**  
49.3CC ENGINE  
5.4KG DRY WEIGHT  
45CM CUT LENGTH  
EASYSTART RECOIL

**CS5600**  
56CC ENGINE  
5.2KG DRY WEIGHT  
50CM CUT LENGTH  
EASYSTART RECOIL

Wide range of handheld machinery including hedgecutters, grass trimmers & more

**EVOPOS.com**

business software holding you back?

MTD Compliant

**01202 795900**  
**sales@evopos.co.uk**

Simply and efficiently help  
sell more, improve customer

WE'RE GROWING  
WANT TO BE PART OF IT?

our partners of choice

**NFU Scotland**  
**NFU**  
**BASC**

**BECOME A CAN-AM DEALER NOW!**

<http://www.brp.com/en/become-a-dealer.html>  
Paul Wood - paul.wood@brp.com - 077 7054 4576

**can-am**

- Competitive range of ATVs & UTVs
- Excellent range of accessories
- Good profit margins

A BRP BRAND

©2019 Bombardier Recreational Products Inc (BRP). All rights reserved. ®, TM and the BRP logo are registered trademarks of BRP or its affiliates.

# A SOLID FOUNDATION ON WHICH TO START A CAREER



Rob Edwards, Business Development Manager, Agriculture, Kubota UK

*That's what Kubota's Rob Edwards believes the company's new apprenticeship scheme offers young people starting out in the industry.*  
**Editor STEVE GIBBS reports**

**K**ubota believes in apprenticeship schemes. It has faith that by nurturing the next generation of talent, so that they have a solid foundation on which to build their career, will prove invaluable for the dealer network in the future. In support of this, the manufacturer has recently teamed up with Coleg Cambria Llysfasi, based in North Wales, to train future workers in land-based engineering.

Together they have launched the Kubota Apprenticeship Scheme, a three-year block release programme which will blend education at the Denbighshire facility with on-the-job experience at a local Kubota dealership.

The qualification the apprentices will be studying for is the new City and Guilds Level 3 Advanced Technical Extended Diploma.

With the ongoing difficulties in recruiting new staff which dealerships across the country are currently experiencing, Rob Edwards, Business

Development Manager, Agriculture, Kubota UK, explained to *Service Dealer* why he believes schemes such as this are the way forward.

Rob said, "When approaching staffing challenges, dealerships must look at the wider context of the industry they are working in as a whole. Take the agriculture sector, for example, which is adapting to a rapidly growing global population, the demand for more food from less land with fewer inputs such as fertilisers and chemicals, and all being achieved with the use of more complex, technologically-driven machinery.

"In addition, the farmers that dealers are working with are also experiencing a period of change. We know that farmers are very good at perfecting quality produce in the UK, but there are not enough astute agricultural managers within the entirety of the sector. The countryside can be a complicated ecosystem and therefore professionals with the right management skills are sought after, and these skilled roles are essential

to the running and understanding of farms and agriculture. In short, there has been a shift in the skills that farmers require; it's no longer enough to just be good at farming, they need to also know how to sell and market their produce/services.

"The same can be seen throughout other industries," Rob continued, "as most are facing similar situations in terms of technological advancement and the demand for skills. All of this means that there is now more pressure on dealers as they need to understand the environments that their customers are operating in, and to work closely with this new breed of customers."

To fulfil these demands, Rob believes that in turn dealerships need a highly trained, well-educated modern workforce, that can rapidly adjust to the aforementioned changes. "This is a large contributing factor as to why Kubota UK has placed a priority on delivering its high-quality apprenticeship scheme," he explained, "so that the next generation of dealer

# FROM START ■ TO ■ FINISH™



FROM DIGGING



TO PLANTING



FROM GROWING



TO CUTTING



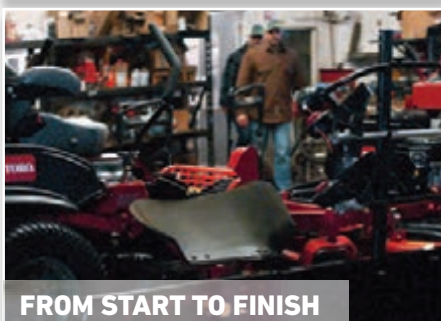
FROM MOWING



TO CLEARING



TORO HAS WHAT I NEED



FROM START TO FINISH

From hardscape to landscape to mowing, Toro® has you covered with a full range of solutions for the jobs you need to do.

With over 100 years of expertise in innovative solutions for the outdoor environment, Toro continues to develop equipment designed with input from grounds professionals.

Our agronomists and engineers are always hard at work developing new solutions to deliver what matters most to professionals – increased productivity, reduced fuel consumption, ease of use, durability and reliability.

From start to finish, tradesmen know they can count on Toro to get the job done.

If you're interested in becoming a Toro dealer delivering quality landscaping products, please contact [office@toro.co.uk](mailto:office@toro.co.uk) or call **+44 1279 723 444**



technicians have a solid foundation upon which to start their career.”

Rob continued, explaining, “With the industries we work in becoming increasingly complex, the modern workforce has to be skilled, dynamic and above all else have a proactive work ethic. We strongly believe that attracting new graduates to a career as a dealership technician is an issue worth championing. The demands on businesses to ensure that professionalism, quality and customer service are met all come down to the right people, which is why we care so much about investing in the next generation.”

Talking about the recent partnership with Llysfasi College in Wales, Rob said how this will allow the trainees to enjoy full-time employment with their local Kubota dealer as well as have formal specialist training during their time at college. “We feel this is really important in order to prepare them for work,” Rob said, “but also to keep them engaged and enthused throughout their studies.

“Our aim is to nurture best-in-class technicians, and the City and Guilds Level 3 Advanced Technical Extended Diploma that they will receive upon completion of the course is a marker of this. We’re also proud that this scheme and our partnership

with Cambria Llysfasi will have a major impact on the future of the industry, enabling us to train the next generation of dealership technicians to the highest levels, with a view to providing the highest of standards of service to the end user.”

Rob is well aware that many dealers can often feel frustration that following the investment of time, money and effort in training up a new apprentice, sometimes those individuals can have their heads turned by other industries. *Service Dealer* hears many a tale of dealers losing good people to sectors such as the automotive trade, for example. What are Rob’s thoughts on retention of staff?

“When it comes to retention,” he says, “dealerships must move with the times and equip their staff with the skills they need to be able to adapt to the challenges that they and their customers are facing within the wider industry they operate in. This will help them to both retain their employees, but also set them up for success in their day-to-day roles.

“The various industries that dealers are working in, be it agriculture, construction and so on, are experiencing not only a rapid advancement of different technologies, but also a myriad of

other issues that pertain to the current business landscape. These include skills gaps, political uncertainty, policy and regulation change – the list goes on.

“If dealerships can train their staff not only in the practical skills they need to complete the job – taking into account any technological changes that come their way – but also to be able to support their customers through wider industry movements, then staff will constantly be challenged and feel fulfilled, leading to a higher level of retention.”

## APPRENTICESHIP SUCCESS

A flagship story which Rob Edwards believes impresses the value of training is that of Kubota UK’s Technical Apprentice, Matt Davis.

After completing the Kubota Apprenticeship scheme, Matt has gone on to be awarded the title of Learner of the Year by the Worshipful Company of Cutlers, via City & Guilds. He has also received one of the Medals for Excellence, a programme which recognises the impressive achievements of learners and tutors. Each year a small number of prestigious awards are presented to the most exceptional individuals.

Matt himself says that since joining Kubota UK a few years ago he has



Kubota believes dealerships need a highly trained, well-educated modern workforce



Kubota's apprenticeship scheme allows trainees to enjoy full-time employment with a dealer as well as have formal specialist training at college

# “THE RESOURCES AND SUPPORT THAT YOU RECEIVE ALLOW YOU TO PUSH YOUR BOUNDARIES ON A DAILY BASIS TO ACHIEVE YOUR POTENTIAL”

learnt so much. “There have been many challenges that I have had to face,” Matt said, “but I’ve always had the support I’ve needed both from my training and through the apprenticeship programme itself.

“Throughout my course, I’ve been taught to complete a range of tasks such as engine and transmission strip downs, or to diagnose and repair faults. At first these seemed daunting, but the training has helped me to

grow in confidence as an engineer, capable of tackling similar tasks in the future.

Matt truly believes he has had an amazing start to his career having completed the Kubota Apprenticeship Scheme, which aims to give apprentices a grounding in a combination of theory and practical-based skills.

“Engineering has always appealed to me as a career,” Matt says. “The

variety of machinery is vast and this industry has everything from hand-held 2-stroke equipment all the way through to mowers, utility vehicles and tractors – and from compact machines to large agricultural ones. Ultimately, I wanted to learn more and make a positive impact on the future of the industry that I’m working in, and I feel like the programme has definitely set me up to do this throughout my career.”

Matt wholeheartedly recommends that anybody considering an engineering apprenticeship should definitely consider applying for a place on a scheme.

“Based on my experience,” he says, “the resources and support that you receive allow you to push your boundaries on a daily basis to achieve your potential. The end goal is to graduate as a well-rounded, competent engineer who can cope with the day-to-day rigours of the role.

“I wouldn’t hesitate in recommending these courses to anybody who is looking for a career in horticultural and agricultural engineering.”



**Matt Davis, Technical Apprentice, Kubota UK has been awarded the title of Learner of the Year by the Worshipful Company of Cutlers, via City & Guilds – as well as receiving a Medal for Excellence**

# SME DIGEST

ADVICE FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED ENTERPRISES



Edited by Adam Bernstein

## STAFFING – RECRUITMENT PITFALLS

# RECRUITING WITHOUT FEAR

**R**emarkable as it sounds, a European Court of Justice (ECJ) case involved a German who applied for jobs in which he was not really interested, writes Lee Ashwood, Principal Associate in the employment department of Eversheds Sutherland. He was only after the rejections which gave him an excuse to launch a discrimination claim that sought compensation. In ruling on the case, the ECJ said that discrimination law protection only applies where an individual has a genuine interest in the job they're applying for.

So, with job applicants becoming ever more savvy about their rights and employers more concerned about facing claims of discrimination or for compensation from unsuccessful applicants, what can they do to reduce the likelihood that such a claim would succeed?

### Not easy

It can be very difficult to get the right person for the job, particularly when trying to protect your company and your reputation against the increased risk of litigation in relation to discrimination and equal opportunities.

The UK's discrimination law provides protection to all job applicants from less favourable or unfavourable treatment because of any of the following, their: age; disability; gender reassignment; marital status or civil partnership; pregnancy or maternity; race, colour, nationality or ethnicity; religion or philosophical beliefs; sex (ie gender); or sexual orientation – these are known as 'protected characteristics'.

### Job description and person specification

The job description is an important document in the application process

and may help to protect against the risk of future disputes provided that the applicant is made aware of what is expected from them from the start of their employment. The job description should be objective, identify the main purpose of the job and set out the specific tasks that need to be completed.

You should avoid making assumptions as to how the role needs to be completed. For example, do not state that the role must be completed on a full-time basis if, in reality, it would be suited to part-time working or job-sharing, as this could potentially be discriminatory.

The person specification is slightly different and this is where businesses commonly fall foul of discrimination laws. For example, stating that any applicant must have a degree and five years' experience is likely to be age discrimination. This is because any applicant who graduated less than five years ago, and so is likely to be younger than any applicant who graduated more than five years ago, is not even going to be interviewed for the role irrespective of how valuable and relevant their work experience has been since graduating.

This is where identifying 'essential' and 'preferable' criteria is useful. It might be essential, for example, that every applicant has a certain degree whilst it might be 'preferable' if, since graduating they have worked in a certain industry, but not essential.

### Advertising

Methods that are less costly, ie relying on word of mouth and internal recruitment, increase the risk of a discrimination claim as you may find you have a very narrow group of potential applicants due to not letting the wider world know about the vacancy.

When preparing the wording of the advertisement, referring back to the job description and person specification you have prepared will help reduce the risk of discriminatory language being used. In order to prevent mistakes being made inadvertently, have someone review the wording for you to gauge what their first impression of the job advertisement is.

If you decide to use a recruitment agency, you should ensure that your instructions to the agency are clear and non-discriminatory. This is because you are still liable for the agency's actions, to an extent.

### Applications

It is recommended that, where possible, more than one person should be involved in considering applications to reduce the chances of discrimination arising. An objective assessment should be made based on the applicant's CV or application form, with the same criteria being applied in respect of each application, for example awarding a point for each criterion the applicant meets with those applicants who score the highest marks being invited for interview. This will help you to demonstrate that you have not been discriminatory but have been objective and treated every application the same.

### Interviewing applicants

Ideally, interviewers should be trained to conduct interviews with equality in mind, such as avoiding being influenced by stereotypical assumptions relating to an applicant. Assumptions about an applicant's age, nationality, or any other protected characteristic could be discriminatory. When arranging the interview, you should ask applicants in advance whether they have any special requirements,

for example to assist them with any physical impairments. Once notified of any disabilities, you will be under a duty to make reasonable adjustments to assist the applicant so that they are not put at a disadvantage when interviewed. If you are unaware that the applicant is disabled until it becomes apparent at the interview itself, you are obliged by law to take reasonable steps (known as 'adjustments') to ensure that they are not at a disadvantage.

Where possible, interview questions should be structured and based on the application form, job description and person specification. Any questions which do not relate to the employee's ability to perform the role should be avoided. For example, asking an applicant questions about their plans for children would not be relevant to their ability to do the job and could be perceived as you not wanting to employ a mother which would be discriminatory. If this sort of information relating to a protected characteristic is volunteered by the applicant, interviewers should ensure that they are not influenced by it and do not take it into account when selecting the successful applicant.

### Creating a paper trail

Having a paper trail documenting decisions made in the recruitment process will place employers in a better position to show they took reasonably practical steps to prevent unlawful discrimination or harassment.



## STAFFING - MOTIVATION

# GIVE YOUR STAFF SOME ADDED 'OOMPF'

It's remarkable that some managers are in positions of authority not because they're good with people, but because of seniority, says SME Digest editor, Adam Bernstein. While they may be proficient in their work, if they have poor interpersonal skills the mood and the success of a business will take a hit. So how should managers motivate their staff?

It's important to understand that individuals cannot be motivated to do anything willingly through commands. The reality is that people must want to do something – coercion is never going to work long-term. Employees only really do something because the outcome appeals to them in some way.

There are two main motivators that managers can use to achieve a given outcome - extrinsic and intrinsic. The former occurs when a factor 'external' to the individual causes them to act.

A good example would be the carrot of double time pay for working on a weekend. In general, many managers use extrinsic motivation to get things done through what is in effect bribery, promises and compliments.

The problem with this form of motivation is that its effects rarely last and so requires larger and larger incentives to keep the motivation going. Boosting someone's salary doesn't last long as a motivator as they soon become used to the extra money.

The other form of motivation, intrinsic, follows when someone takes a course of action for reasons personal to them. This could mean working into an evening because they feel that the job is so worthwhile that they want to see it completed. Everything people do is ultimately determined by the values they hold.

Managers who are good with people are those that understand how staff tick and what interests them. The time they invest with staff in creating a bond, finding the intrinsic

motivators and matching those to extrinsic options is often well spent.

In terms of extrinsic motivations, managers shouldn't be deluded into thinking that just offering money is the cure-all panacea. Staff in the world we live in now consider it their right to be paid at the true market rate. This means that in addition to paying the going rate, firms need to think about other benefits to keep staff working onside.

Staff nowadays want - need - to develop themselves to enhance their market potential so that they are an attractive prospect to other employers. If an employer can't help, then staff may well move to another firm that can.

Many now strive to achieve a good work life balance. Those that help staff achieve this balance are on to a winner.

While (most) businesses aren't a democracy, staff still like to think that they have some level of input into any decisions that may affect them. Any organisation that acts like a bully and ignores this is on a hiding to nothing.

It's often said that people have short attention spans. While this clearly won't apply to everyone, it nevertheless makes sense to give staff plenty of achievable goals with plenty of positive feedback for the instances where goals have been achieved. The warm glow of recognised success works wonders for morale.

And let's not forget the obvious. People aren't automatons – they require interesting tasks to keep them satisfied, motivated and engaged. Drudgery is a perfect reason to leave a business.

Managers should review the points made and if anything is missing, it should be placed on the agenda. Equally important is the need to establish a routine that leads to updated background profiles of staff, with a view to matching them to extrinsic motivators that can be offered.

Business that think about what staff really want will find a smoother and more harmonious route to success.

# VELVET HANDCUFFS

Every time a valued employee leaves you a large portion of your bottom line goes with them, never to be seen again, writes Deiric McCann, Freelance business writer. Using 'velvet handcuffs' you can make your firm so attractive that these valuable assets don't want to leave.

If someone leaves you it's not just a case of having to go back through an increasingly difficult and time-consuming search and recruitment process. The financial costs vary but can be as high as one or two times the defector's annual salary. And that's just the financial cost – look at the many impacts on other areas such as morale, productivity, customer confidence and so on, and you'll see that the real cost is much higher, especially as customers can follow employees elsewhere.

When employees begin to consider changing jobs they weigh the benefits of staying put versus the benefits of moving on. Every employee's job-delivered value is different – a complex mix of money, perks, work environment, company culture, attitudes, career development, employee relations and quality of life. Your challenge is to create a situation where every employee can get a balance of these factors that convinces them that there is more value to remaining with your organisation than moving to another.

Retention begins at the front door – when you hire. You will only retain (or want to retain) employees when there is a good fit between those employees, the requirements of their jobs, and your firm's culture. If there's no fit they simply won't work out – they'll either become a liability to your team or they'll turnover. Either way they'll cost you money. Smart companies don't hire out of desperation, they hire only those employees they can retain. Be sure that you use a hiring process that allows you to fit employees into your positions – use the approach of "hiring smart".

Once you have the right people you'll now want to use all approaches that you can to retain them. One key point: if different people value different things then you're going to have to provide a grab-bag of added value that will allow you to tailor the value delivered to any given employee such that it outweighs what they might gain by moving on. Using 'velvet handcuffs' means locking your people in with whatever positive benefits you can deliver to them as an employee. The following are the sort of initiatives you should consider:



## Money

It may well still be a way of getting attention in the job market, but it's not enough to assure retention. Note that money isn't really a determining factor to most people. However, it is always an issue – your salaries must be competitive and fair for the skills your employees possess. Whilst lots of money won't necessarily retain potential defectors, a lack of it will help their decisions to defect.

## Employee orientation is key

Anecdotal evidence shows that long-term employee loyalty is dramatically improved when they are properly inducted into the company. All very successful organisations provide formal employee orientation sessions lasting from a few hours to a few weeks. In these sessions the employee is introduced to the company, its philosophies and procedures, and is made to feel part of the team from the outset. With a little imagination induction sessions are practical for jobs at any level.

## Career advancement and skill development

All employees want to feel like they are part of a winning team, and that there is an opportunity for them to advance within the company. If that is a possibility, then work with them to create career development plans. If that opportunity simply doesn't exist, then it's particularly important to provide alternative opportunities for employees to advance themselves and their skills through ongoing training. This could be something as simple as group learning of new products or collectively going to shows.

## Flexibility

There is much talk just now of the difficulty of finding childcare in an era when it is increasingly essential that both partners in a relationship bring in a salary. A little flexibility can often be a significant value-add for people in this situation. Look for opportunities to provide flexi-hours, job sharing and even more holiday time. Managed properly this can be a relatively inexpensive but extremely highly valued perk.

## Recognition

This is another factor that costs little but has a disproportionately high value to many employees. Provide formal and informal praise. Consider Employee of the Month type schemes that give you an opportunity to give every employee their deserved 15 minutes of fame. Also, ensure that your managers are actively looking for opportunities to praise employees for a job well done – frequent one-minute praising makes a remarkable difference to employee morale. Reward positive comments from customers.

Make your organisation one where your people happily manacle themselves to your future. Lock in your key assets – your people.



# uni-power

ENGINES • TRANSMISSIONS • PARTS

Free Carriage Offer - New Website Shopping Cart

Special Offer

**Free Carriage** until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 for all parts stock orders placed within our new shopping cart.

Top Features Include:

Live stock availability for each item.

See RRP's, discount & your NET prices for each item.



## ENGINES



**HONDA**  
ENGINES

**KOHLER**  
Engines

**Kubota**

**LOMBARDINI**  
A KOHLER COMPANY

**VANGUARD**  
COMMERCIAL POWER

**YANMAR**

## TRANSMISSIONS

**HYDRO-GEAR**

**PEERLESS**  
TRANSMISSIONS



## MACHINERY PARTS

**HONDA**  
POWER EQUIPMENT



**Simplicity**

**MURRAY**

**Kubota**

**SNAPPER**



TEL: 01371 875331

info@uni-power.co.uk

www.uni-power.co.uk



# HIRING FOR THE PARTS DEPARTMENT

*Sara Hey, Vice President of Operations and Development at Bob Clements Inc, the dealership development company based in Missouri, shares the insights she offers US dealers with Service Dealer's UK readership in every issue. This time, advice for dealers looking to recruit for their parts department*

**N**ot just anyone can be picked up from the street and placed at the parts counter. There is a mix of customer service, technical knowledge, sales ability and attention to detail required to be an excellent parts person. So, when you are in need of the mystical parts person, how and where do you find them? There never seems like there are enough to go around!

We often talk about how, as we are looking for good employees, we need to hire low and grow. The same holds true for a parts counter sales person.

As an example, if we wanted to hire low and grow a parts counter sales person, we might hire a mum whose children had just started school and wanted to get back into the work force. Having her put away the stocking order and do inventory counts would not only help the process for your parts department, but would also be training her to be a parts counter sales person one day.

One of the ways we see dealers looking for

employees are job recruiter sites. Job recruiter sites are much like using Google for a specific function. They all use Search Engine Optimization (or SEO for short) to match a job seeker with a job. What that means is simply this: you use other words or phrases to make sure that your webpage, or job posting in this case, comes up as many times as possible.

This is exactly what we want to have happen with job

recruiter sites. Our goal is to use words or

phrases for the same position that cross over into other industries. For example, if we are looking for a Parts Counter Sales Person we could use words or phrases like: automotive, auto, auto sales, auto parts, dealer, dealership, cities or nicknames of areas around your area, or even brands that you may carry.

As we utilise job recruiter sites, we want to find the best possible candidates and often it's not who we think it might be. We encourage our dealers to make sure you let people know you are hiring. This isn't just limited to your employees; let friends and family know as well. You never know when someone is looking for a change or may have a move coming up. The more you can share that you are hiring, the better your chance of finding the right person.

As you are thinking about specific places to find a new counter parts sales person, one place we suggest looking is other places you do business. This could be just about anywhere that you have had a great customer service experience.

Keep in mind, you can train skill but you can't train attitude. Often, your parts counter is the first experience your customers have with your dealership.

Recently, a big warehouse chain in the US closed over 100 stores across the country, each store employed over 100 people. These are managers, people who do inventory, and people who are trained to do excellent customer service. Being in tune with these changes gives you the ability to hire the best of the best from these stores when transition happens.

People coming out of the military are great in the parts department as well. The military has people who are solely responsible to do inventory for different divisions. These would be great people to have in your parts department. Your local military veterans resource centre should be able to connect you with the right people.

When you are in the midst of needing a parts person, it's easy to think any warm body will do. But take the time to find the right person and they will help grow your department to new levels.



# A SIZZLING SUMMER!

*General Manager of Briants of Risbough, Chris Startling, has been covering the parts and service counter which proved a refresher on a number of dealership fronts.*

**W**e may not have seen the prolonged dry spell of 2018 but it's still turning out to be another hot summer in the South of the country. Long-range weather forecasts are predicting a number of further heatwaves through until September. Luckily thus far the grass and hedges have been saved by a few interspersed days and nights of rain. In product terms we've seen a strong mix of professional mowers, cordless handheld and hedge trimmer accessories on the customers' shopping lists – whilst a sudden influx of 2-stroke repairs and a steady flow of pedestrian mowers has kept the three technicians busy throughout July and August.

Having covered the service and parts counter for two weeks back in July, it was a great refresher on a number of fronts – parts sales, service bookings, supplier ordering and understanding in detail the staff challenges. A department in which you need to have or develop a great deal of patience and diplomacy! Customers returning recently serviced machinery stating we haven't repaired it correctly, only to find that their little darling has been filling the petrol tank up with long grass! Or even more frequently where the customers have gone home and immediately filled it straight back up with a 50/50 mix of petrol and something resembling water. In many cases customers will steadfastly refuse to accept responsibility for their own mishaps even if their child has force-fed the mower! Hence the technicians are resorting to keeping samples of contaminated fuels and taking photos of their findings to ease the 'customers word against ours' scenario. It is, of course, an opportunity to diligently re-educate those willing to listen, selling the benefits of pre-mixed or stabilised fuels or additives, funnels with filters, measuring jugs etc.

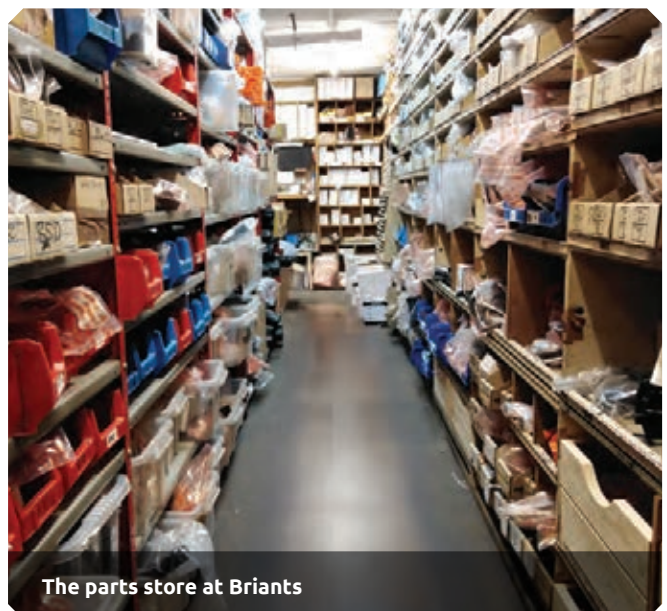
Another observation, whilst spending time with the technicians, has been the increasing volume of cordless products arriving across the service reception counter. We're delighted to see the units back for repair and maintenance, especially as there has always been an industry fear that it would in some way put pay to servicing. In our opinion, regardless of power source, the work the kit is being asked to perform can only withstand the day-in, day-out punishment if regularly maintained. However, there is a BUT coming... the frustration for the technicians (granted they are still biased as they love pulling engines apart) is that where manufacturer diagnostic equipment exists, it is clouding and prolonging the decision making. Diagnostic tools can tell you to fit

three or four different new electronic parts before it has successfully got the machine working, when in fact only one part was ever faulty! You can't pass on all the labour to the customer and in many instances, you end up having to put many new parts back into your own inventory. On popular models we're contemplating producing test rigs/kits to manually eliminate faulty components ourselves rather than run the risk of replacing and ordering in components which are in fact fault-free. We appreciate it's a learning process for all concerned but it's currently costing us in both parts stock holding and having to absorb labour time.

Roll on October when the next round of holiday cover in the Parts and Service department comes around again.



**Chris Startling, General Manager of Briants of Risbough, with Rebecca Briant, Managing Director**



**The parts store at Briants**

# PRODUCTS

CONTACT:  
07929 438213  
steve@servicedealer.co.uk

## FORESTRY

# MOST POWERFUL CORDLESS PRO SAW FROM STIHL

*MSA 220 C-B suited to felling, thinning work, construction and wood carving*

Suitable for forestry and agricultural work, STIHL has launched the new MSA 220 C-B, the most powerful cordless chainsaw in its range.

Designed with a high chain speed, the company says the new saw offers consistently high-quality cutting performance, regardless of the battery charge level. The new pro unit is suited for felling, thinning work, construction and wood carving.

The saw comes as standard with the STIHL exclusive 3/8" Picco Super 3 (PS3) full chisel saw chain with a guide bar length of 35cm/14". This chain is described as having a high cutting performance and a low kick-back.

As part of STIHL's PRO cordless range, the MSA 220 C-B is powered by

a 36V lithium-ion battery. The new AP 300 S battery is recommended to ensure the best possible cutting performance and is also compatible with all other tools within the STIHL PRO Cordless system.

The company says the saw starts with ease, accelerates quickly and always maintains a high cutting performance, regardless of the battery charge level. Responsible for this is the electronically controlled brushless electric motor.

This EC motor is extremely efficient

and works almost wear-free.

In addition, the STIHL AP 300 S battery, which is also new, has 25% more capacity compared with the AP 300 and can run for up to 45 minutes on one charge. Thanks to the high chain speed of 24m/s, the work can be carried out quickly even when delimiting smaller sized timber.

Other practical features include the quick chain tensioner, which enables the chain to be retightened without tools, and the semi-transparent oil tank, which allows the user to keep an eye on the oil level at all times.



## DOMESTIC

# CORDLESS COBRAS CATER FOR CHANGING CONDITIONS

*Four models in the range*

Cobra's new cordless mower range has been designed to cater for the changing conditions of the British lawn.

The new machines feature a single-lever height adjuster, a power indicator to monitor the mower's battery life and good recharge times.

There are four models in the

range with a choice of cutting widths up to 46cm. Each is described by the manufacturer as quiet yet powerful and features a smart Samsung 40V lithium-ion battery. It has a rapid recharge time and the battery will not discharge in storage or lose its memory.

Each Cobra mower, says the company, offers comfort and style. For example, the premium MX46S40V is self-propelled, has a 4-in-1 collection system and seven cutting heights to choose from.



## AGRICULTURAL

# NEW V CONVEYOR FOR STRAUTMANN VERTI-MIX

*Adapted to dispense feed over a feed barrier*



Strautman V conveyor

Strautmann has introduced a new design of discharge conveyor for its Verti-Mix feeder wagons.

Specifically adapted to dispense feed over a feed barrier or into a trough, the new V conveyor has been simplified to reduce the number of moving parts to help extend belt longevity, therefore reducing ownership costs.

The V Conveyor has one continuous PVC unloading belt which, in addition to being able to discharge to both left and right, can be set by the operator to increase discharge height by up to 55cm, as well as providing a side shift of approximately 25cm.

Twin hydraulic motors provide drive for the conveyor and pivoting deflectors at each end ensure material is channelled in the correct direction. These swing into place automatically when the belt changes direction and do not require an additional hydraulic or electric function to operate.

All Strautmann Verti-Mix diet mixers feature the Vario2 stepped auger which tumbles the mix, producing a fluffy homogenous mix faster.

## DOMESTIC

# BUILT FROM UNI-SCRATCH

*New synthetic turf maintenance tool from Campey*

Campey Turf Care Systems has launched the Uni-Scratch.

The unit can be used for organic matter removal on natural grass hybrid carpet pitches when carrying out annual renovations.

The company says regularly maintaining synthetic pitches is vital because it prevents infill compaction. When a synthetic surface is regularly used the infill can become lodged and cause uneven hard and soft areas that eventually leads to drainage issues and flattening of the artificial fibres.

To prevent this, the Uni-Scratch has been developed to provide essential maintenance by de-compacting and redistributing the infill.

The machine can also be used to evenly distribute the infill in synthetic carpets during installation.

idverde UK, which manages a growing portfolio of sports pitches and facilities on behalf of several local authorities, is the first company in the United Kingdom to purchase the machine and Operations Manager,



Campey Uni-Scratch

Steve Tingley, explained why.

He said, "We install and maintain a lot of hybrid carpet surfaces and we are always looking at new machines and how they can improve our operation. We bought the Uni-Scratch specifically to speed up and improve our maintenance procedure and it has met the aims we had for it."

# SUPER VARIO BROTHERS

## Five models in Fendt's new large tractor series

Fendt has launched the new 900 Vario large tractor series.

With its five models (930 Vario, 933 Vario, 936 Vario, 939 Vario and 942 Vario), the new series sits in the power range of 296 to 415hp (according to ECE R120), in the compact high-power tractor class, slotting into the power range between the Fendt 800 Vario and the 1000 Vario. The new top model Fendt 942 Vario sees the 900-series venture beyond 400-hp for the first time.

Made for heavy tractive or PTO work like wood chopping, the company says the 900-series is also suitable for transport at up to 60km/h. The unladen weight of 11.7 tonnes and the integrated VarioGrip

tyre pressure regulation system makes this series suitable for work with low ground pressure and high tractive power. Thanks to its modular equipment with or without rear power lift, rear PTO, front PTO, reversing driver station and a range of hydraulic, attachment and power lift models, it is compatible with all common attachments.

All models in the new 900-series are equipped with an all-new MAN six-cylinder engine designed for Fendt, with a cubic capacity of nine litres and VTG turbocharger with variable turbine geometry.

The torque is distributed dynamically over the front and rear axle, depending on the ground

conditions. The front axle is driven separately. The decoupling of the rear and front axle avoids tension on the road and on bends and allows full traction in the field. Especially during cornering, the tractor is pulled around the curve by the 'pull-in turn' effect. The result is a small turning circle with full traction.

The further development of the Fendt 900 Vario includes implementing the new Emissions Stage V (EU). The exhaust gas in the new large tractor is purified with an exhaust after-treatment system using a diesel oxidation catalyst, a diesel particulate filter and the Selective Catalytic Reduction technology (SCR) to reduce nitrogen.



Model shown Fendt 900 Vario

## Partners in application solutions

- In-house Design and manufacture
- Full support and spare parts availability
- Good Margins and incentives
- Full product range
- 12 month Warranty
- Cereal/Turf/Potato applicators



[www.techneat.co.uk](http://www.techneat.co.uk) | t: 01353 862 044 | e: [info@techneat.co.uk](mailto:info@techneat.co.uk)

**Techneat**  
engineering ltd

## FORESTRY

# AGGRESSIVE TORQUE FROM GREENMECH

*Evo 165 launched at Arb Show earlier in year*

The ARB Show provided the launch platform for GreenMech to introduce its new woodchipper series, the EVO 165.

The company says this new range has been designed in direct response to industry demands to deliver more aggressive torque, more powerful bite and more throughput.

Featuring a wide infeed chute, together with twin horizontal rollers and GreenMech's No-Stress control system means the Evo 165 efficiently grips timber and brush, and controls its lateral movement to provide maximum bite and processing power via its new, heavy-duty flywheel and re-flowed exit chute.

Optimised outputs from a diesel or petrol engine option provide usable power that matches budget with operational needs, alongside maximum fuel efficiency and compliance with Stage V Emission requirements. The EVO is the quietest machine GreenMech has produced to date.

The company has fitted the Evo with a new safety bar system to minimise nuisance tripping while offering a better inflow of material. The machine's durability has been increased with the adoption of a



Greenmech EVO 165 44

one-piece fabricated chassis that provides greater strength in demanding operational conditions. Meanwhile, GreenMech's patented Disc Blade system continues to provide in excess of 900 chipping hours before replacement.

When maintenance is required, the vertical and horizontal shear bars have been re-engineered to be more accessible and a centralised greasing point has been introduced to make regular servicing easier to carry out.

## COMMERCIAL

# MOWER WITH TRACTOR FUNCTIONALITY FROM TYM



*The new TYM T194*

The new TYM T194 mower is described by the company as having the features of a ride-on mower with the additional functionality of a tractor.

TYM Sales Manager Steven Haynes said of the unit, "It appeals to the woodland and forestry, estate management and gardens sectors with its ability to maintain lawns and gardens, as well as comfortably dealing with the clearing, carrying, transporting and towing jobs

you'd associate with a tractor."

Equipped with a 54-inch mid-mounted deck, mowing height can be adjusted from the seat via the onboard height-of-cut lever which is easy to use and intuitive to set.

Its tractor credentials hinge on the category one three-point linkage and 540rpm rear PTO which allows for many rear-mounted attachments to be fitted and enables it to be used for numerous tasks around the garden, orchard, woods and fields.

The company says it can handle the tasks of summer and autumn, as well as winter sweeping and clear-up, and spring jobs.

# EVENTS 2019

## SEPTEMBER 2019

- 1-3 **Spoga-gafa 2019, Cologne**  
[www.spogagafa.com](http://www.spogagafa.com)
- 1-4 **Autumn Fair, Birmingham NEC**  
[www.autumnfair.com](http://www.autumnfair.com)
- 7 **Alresford Show**  
[www.alresfordshow.co.uk](http://www.alresfordshow.co.uk)
- 7-8 **Dorset County Show**  
[www.dorsetcountyshow.co.uk](http://www.dorsetcountyshow.co.uk)
- 10-12 **Glee 2019**  
[www.gleebirmingham.com](http://www.gleebirmingham.com)
- 10-12 **Salon du Végétal, Nantes, France**  
[www.salonduvegetal.com/pro/en/](http://www.salonduvegetal.com/pro/en/)
- 14 **Usk Show**  
[www.uskshow.co.uk](http://www.uskshow.co.uk)
- 14 **Romsey Show**  
[www.romseyshow.co.uk](http://www.romseyshow.co.uk)

## OCTOBER 2019

- 2 **The Dairy Show, Bath and West Showground**  
[www.bathandwest.com/the-dairy-show](http://www.bathandwest.com/the-dairy-show)
- 16-18 **Green Industry & Equipment Expo, Louisville, USA**  
<http://gie-expo.com>
- 19-20 **Countryside Live, Harrogate**  
[www.countrysidelive.co.uk](http://www.countrysidelive.co.uk)
- 30-31 **IOG Saltex 2019, Birmingham NEC**  
[www.iogsaltex.com](http://www.iogsaltex.com)

## NOVEMBER 2019

- 10-16 **Agritechnica, Hanover, Germany**  
[www.agritechnica.com/en/](http://www.agritechnica.com/en/)
- 21 **Service Dealer Conference & Awards**  
[www.servicedealer.co.uk](http://www.servicedealer.co.uk)
- 25-26 **Royal Welsh Winter Fair**  
[www.rwas.wales/winter-fair](http://www.rwas.wales/winter-fair)
- 27-28 **CropTec 2019, East of England Showground**  
[www.croptecshow.com](http://www.croptecshow.com)



Sponsored by

**STIHL**®





# YOU CAN TRAIN SKILLS, BUT YOU CAN'T TRAIN ATTITUDE'

*There has probably been no better time to recruit high-calibre staff*

**T**he above headline jumped out at me when reading an article by US outdoor power consultant Bob Clements (who will be bringing his brand of positive thinking and sales training to the *Service Dealer* Conference in November). Writing in the trade magazine *Rural Lifestyle Dealer*, Bob was discussing issues of recruitment for the parts department, but it could apply for other posts throughout the dealership.

Gone are my dealership days during the '70s and '80s when the queue at the parts desk often stretched out of the front door. "Have you a widget for my mower?" "What make is it?" "It's green."

Although we're unlikely to ever need crowd control again, the parts counter is often the place where new customers first encounter your staff.

Attitude is the first requirement. A smile, an acknowledgement, putting customers at ease and not treating them as idiots will nearly always make the ensuing transaction run smoothly.

Being a small business (as most of you are), recruiting staff is rarely an exact science. We tend to be unimpressed with degrees, fancy qualifications, 'know-alls' and high-flyers.

I bet the key question uppermost in your mind during a job interview is a simple, "Will he or she fit in?"

In recent surveys in *Service Dealer*, problems of recruiting new staff invariably tops the list of concerns.

However, I would contend that there has never been so many potential new recruits in the job market.

Look what has happened to the so-called High Street. It's been decimated by store closures and resulting redundancies. There will be good people, experienced

people, who have left their jobs through no fault of their own. You might not tap a rich seam amongst ex-Mothercare or Boots employees, but stores such as Homebase, Maplin, Evans Cycles and others will have employed people with excellent customer-facing skills that are transferable to a small business.

The key is to 'sell' your business hard to potential recruits. You are a retailer in the leisure and home improvement market. You are small, nimble and adaptable. You are innovative and creative.

The reasons why most of these folks are on the market, is that the companies they worked for got too big, too unresponsive and didn't respond to customers' needs. They were merely pawns in remote strategic decision making.

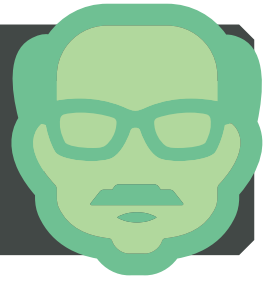
The other reason why you might benefit from recruiting from the major retail chains is that new employees could bring new ideas, new merchandising and layout suggestions for your store that have been used by some of the biggest companies. No, they might not necessarily suit your particular operation, but no business owner should ever shut their eyes and ears to fresh thinking.

Forget for a moment that you are selling mowers, or chainsaws or robotic garden kit; what you offer is something much more valuable.

For the right people, being involved in a small business means involvement, having a say, being part of a team – and above all feeling valued at close quarters and not being just a number.

Any recruitment advertising you do needs to push through that point. Tap into the emotions, sell the USPs of being part of a successful small business – and good luck!

# JIM GREEN



## DOING THEIR BIT

### CUSTOMERS COCK-A-HOOP OVER GREEN PRODUCTS

*Is consumer demand increasing for environmentally-aware purchasing?*



The picture which went viral as Tweeted from Ollie Nancarrow's Born Eco account – his online marketplace connecting buyers with eco-friendly traders

**W**e're all doing our bit these days to be more environmentally aware. The latest one which her indoors Mrs Green who must be obeyed has me doing is stuffing all bits of plastic wrapping into an old plastic tonic bottle. I'm told someone might build a house out of it. Whatever helps, I guess!

Certainly, it seems as if increasing numbers of consumers are now voting with their wallets. Climate change and how our actions impact on the environment is becoming an ever more mainstream concern.

This was highlighted in an eye-catching, if gleefully vulgar fashion, just recently when The Donald graced us with his presence on these shores. That week a teenager from Bishop's Stortford made headlines worldwide when he mowed a very special greeting message for the visiting President into the lawn of his parents' home – which just happened to be under the flight path of Air Force One as it came into land at Stanstead.

Student, Ollie Nancarrow, 18, wrote 'Oi Trump' into the grass – alongside what can only be described as a classic schoolboy depiction of a giant penis and testicles! This was also followed with a further mowed message saying 'Climate change is real' alongside a picture of a polar bear.

Once the story was reported by local

paper, the *Bishop's Stortford Independent*, it was picked up by media outlets worldwide and quickly went viral.

Giving joy to newspaper and website editors across the globe, Ollie's mowing skills were even appreciated by US late night chat show host, Jimmy Kimmel, who interviewed him on his show!

Looking beyond the sniggering though, there was a serious point being made and one which I expect dealers are seeing the consequences of, more and more often in their showrooms.

Making ethical decisions when spending on goods is no longer the domain of a niche section of the marketplace. Buying whilst thinking about your purchase's wider implications is a practice becoming ever more common.

Just think about all the news stories we hear about retailers changing up their offerings to cater for this demand for more sustainable purchasing. Waitrose, for example, recently announcing it is running a bring your own container trial for produce such as rice, pasta and cereals, springs to mind.

Major retailers clearly see customers wanting to spend their cash on environmentally-friendlier products as a significant sector, ripe for exploiting.

In the BBC's article on the story at the time, it turned out that Waitrose even has someone whose job title is Head of Corporate Social Responsibility,

who says they have implemented the scheme in order to "help the growing number of customers who want to shop in a more sustainable way".

So, I'm suspecting that this is a trend which our readers are seeing become ever more prevalent? The way the world is going, whole good sales could well be decreasing and servicing demands increasing.

This could prove great news for the servicing dealer. In recent years we have all bemoaned the so-called 'throw-away culture' – with consumers buying cheap, plastic rubbish from supermarkets, burning it out in a season, only to bin it and buy again. Maybe now the message is getting through that to help do their bit, consumers should be thinking about buying quality which, with the right care and servicing, can last for years?

Finally, returning to Ollie, the mowing artist with a stiff message – Jimmy Kimmel actually asked him on his show, what sort of mower he used to cut his proud picture. Ollie brushed off the question, saying it was just a normal ride-on. But going by a picture in a subsequent article in the local paper, it turned out that it was exactly the sort of mower one would expect to find in Bishop's Stortford. I'm not sure however, if the guys there will be using the attention in their subsequent marketing campaigns?!



# Professional Power for Landowners



Field & Brush Mowers

SSP From £2,399



Wheeled Trimmers

SSP From £549



Stump Grinder

SSP From £1,999



Chippers & Shredders

SSP From £999



For over 30 years, we have taken pride in rethinking property maintenance & building the products we need to take care of the work around our own homes.

**MORE POWER  
MORE PERFORMANCE  
MORE QUALITY**

# MITOX®



SSP From £159

SSP From £159



SSP From £99



SSP From £219



From a small selection of handheld garden equipment, the range has over the last 10 years developed into a comprehensive collection of quality, durable and excellent value for money garden machinery which includes Chainsaws, Brushcutters, Blowers, Hedge Trimmers and more.

For more information about the MITOX range contact your area sales manager on 01963 828006



**2 BRANCHES.  
14 DEDICATED  
STIHL EXPERTS.  
10 METRES OF  
STIHL DISPLAY.  
2200 STIHL  
PRODUCTS AVAILABLE.  
18 TRAINING  
COURSES.  
1 SATISFIED DEALER.  
STIHL LIFE.**

Huw Owen, Director.  
Owen ATVs & Garden Machinery Centre Ltd.  
STIHL Dealer since 2016.

**Retailers like Huw at Owen's  
ATV love being a STIHL  
Approved Dealer. And it's  
not hard to see why.**

At STIHL, our goal is simple. To make sure our dealers' customers benefit from the ultimate sales and service experience. So, we support you with an industry leading

delivery and logistics network. We keep you up to date with all the latest service related developments. And we have a customer service team always on hand to deal with any enquiries.

Better still, we'll give you your own dedicated sales manager to help you develop your

business and drive STIHL sales forward. There are also regular product training sessions and access to unrivalled marketing and promotional support, including the kind of instore merchandising support that has helped Huw create a hugely impressive STIHL display wall to wow his customers.

Put simply, when you become a dealer for the world's best garden equipment, including our legendary chainsaws, we think it's only right you get the world's best service too.

To find out more about becoming  
a STIHL Approved Dealer, visit  
[www.becomeastihldealer.co.uk](http://www.becomeastihldealer.co.uk)

**STIHL®**