



EXACTING WORK FROM OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER

RACHAEL Kennedy knows a thing or two about customer service. An in-depth knowledge of each step of the manufacturing process, an appreciation of her customers' needs and over 20 years working for a high street bank certainly helps!

As the first point of contact for most customers, and with a team of three staff, she is responsible for supplying quotations, taking orders and establishing prices to enquiries that come in daily. She is often the last point of contact also, for she likes to "make sure the customer is happy with their order and be available to sort out any last minute hitches".

After working for Attwater for over three years she is a key person to help customers get the best from the service team. During that time she has become extremely knowledgeable about the products and their applications.

Customer service is something Rachael is familiar with having spent 23 years with the Nat West Bank, ending her time there as lending manager.

As most of our customers speak to Rachael at some point in the product order process, it is surprising that she has met so few of them face-to-face.

The mother of two said: "Of course, I would love to meet more of my customers but we're so busy it is difficult for me to find the time to get out of the office. In the last three years the number of quotes we generate at Attwater has tripled. These come from not only large concerns such as Siemens, BAe Systems & Alstom Transport but also small high-quality engineering companies up and down the UK. While we are so busy I'll have to rely on the telephone and email to keep in touch – and the newsletter, of course."

Speaking of her pivotal role at Attwater, Rachael added: "You

could say my job is to co-ordinate information and know-how from the different experts on staff to the benefit of the customer. Enquiries may come from anywhere in the world but calls frequently come from Germany, France, Spain and the Middle East."

As she is so central to the ordering process Rachael is best suited to unravelling a customer problem if one occurs along the supply chain. Admittedly, it's not a responsibility she volunteered for but one her customers seem happy for her to fulfil.

As a boss Rachael says she is 'tough but fair', and although easygoing she can be exacting with high standards. Next issue we speak to her staff. (Only joking!).

Competition WINNER!

IN our last issue of The Press we ran a competition to test the ingenuity of our customers. We asked if you had found a unique or unconventional use for our carbon fibre or other laminate products.

The winners were Richard Bushell and Kevin Thompson of Peak Production Equipment in Letchworth, Herts. They came up with a creative use of insulating composites

incorporating static safe surfaces in electronic test equipment. For each entry received we made a donation to our favourite charity, children's hospice Derian House, in the winner's name.

Thanks for your entries.



The Quarterly Newsletter from the Attwater Group Issue 2



Dear Colleagues

Hello again and welcome to the second issue of The Press.

We were very pleased to receive your feedback on the first issue and hopefully we will continue to introduce you to the team here at Attwater and to keep you up to date with practical issues that will affect your business. We are delighted to feature in this edition a strengthening of our sales team with a further 20 years of experience in "our" industry and we look at the revised laminate standards that will be introduced later this year.

We will continue to make further improvements to our website www.attwater.co.uk this year and our intention is to make it a reference site for the industry. We remind you that all the data sheets for our materials are available online in printable format along with information on other comparable products.

We look forward to working with you in 2004.

Richard Attwater

IT'S A NEW ELECTRIC WORLD

Anyone in business knows how difficult it is to win and to retain customers these days, but few appreciate the importance of building strong partnerships with customers and how this can have a positive impact for both customer and supplier alike.

We were delighted two years ago to gain a valued customer as a result of our competitive pricing and flexibility and for them to continue using Attwater products ever since. That customer was Schneider Electric, a global company with an unparalleled 160 years of electrical manufacturing history.

The world-class power and control company, specialists in solutions for electrical distribution and industrial automation (or as their mission states "to give the best of the New Electric World to everyone, everywhere at any time"), has grown to become one of our largest customers - and we're proud to be a part of that success.

Schneider Electric Buyer Jan Tice-Robinson, who has liaised with Attwater since we won the contract nearly two years ago, said: "The Attwater Group manufacture the insulation products which enable us to build high quality medium

voltage switchgear for the electrical distribution industry and provide the insulation materials for our Leeds and Scarborough sites.

"We have stringent goals to meet which include a 97% delivery target from our suppliers – Attwater always exceed our requirements; 98%, 99% or even 100% of the time they either meet or exceed our targets.

"But that's not the only reason we brought our business to Attwater: there has also been a significant cost advantage, the high quality products, combined with the excellent service level and overall flexibility of the Attwater Group, gives us reason to be very happy with the service they provide.

"And it's extremely useful having Technical Director Tom Eland on the Attwater team. As chairman of the British Standards Committee of Industrial Laminates he provides excellent back-up support which adds to the overall service they offer."



KEEPING UP STANDARDS

Technical sales director Tom Eland considers the implications of the new 2004 standards

SOMEONE once said 'The good thing about standards is that there are so many of them to choose from'. Joking aside, this can be quite a problem.

Industrial laminates have been around for over 75 years and whilst basic properties have changed little, this cannot be said for the Insulation Standards, which have come and gone.

"Every time a Standard changes there are potential implications for manufacturers and customers alike," says Tom Eland, technical sales director of the Attwater Group. "The implications throughout

industry can be very significant, particularly where the materials are widely specified. Drawings may need to be updated, and in extreme cases material may have to be re-qualified."

Standards in our industry have seen many changes over the years and this year will be no exception. Following an extensive revision of the current Standard IEC60893, a new edition is scheduled for publication early in 2004.

Tom, who is the UK technical expert on the IEC International Standards working group TC15CWG6 and the convenor of the corresponding BSI

working panel, is well placed to know what is going on. Regulations require that the UK must adopt common EU standards where they exist. Where there are conflicting National and European Standards, the common European Standard must be adopted. This regulation resulted in the introduction of a host of new standards during the 1990's and the withdrawal of many others. (Remember BS2572, BS5102 and BS3953? These will probably disappear altogether in 2004.)

Tom has also produced a summary of the changes in the forthcoming revision of IEC60893. The new edition includes a number of new types including a direct equivalent to F1 fabric, which is extensively used in the UK.

Both of these resources are available on our web site at <http://www.attwater.co.uk>

We hope you find them useful.

Helpful Web Resource

It is not uncommon to see engineering drawings well over half a century old. How often have you had to try to identify the specified materials and locate an available alternative?

To help in your quest Attwater has produced a chart that traces the history of many of the laminate types since the early 1900's. The chart cross-references types in the old Standards to grades currently manufactured.

www.attwater.co.uk

QUITE A CATCH! Paul gets snapped up.



NEW sales engineer Paul Davis is quite a catch for the Attwater Group.

It is not often someone with as much industry experience as Paul comes onto the market, so we were very keen to make use of his expertise in the field of laminates when he left his last employer. He not only comes very well recommended but also comes equipped with an invaluable network of contacts that will prove to be vital to a growing company such as The Attwater Group.

Paul comes to Attwater with a technical background and made his name as a sales engineer in the Midlands.

Paul said: "My patch was the middle section of England, which was quite a large territory. I know the area very well so I will be staying on my old patch to extend the reach of Attwater's excellent products."

How would Paul characterise the differences between his last employer and The Attwater Group?

"The first thing to say is that Attwater's are geared to very short lead-in times so they meet orders very quickly and are also competitively priced. When you back that up with great customer service from an experienced team, Attwater's really do have a great set-up. This company is not as large as my last employer but in many ways that can be a benefit to clients who need products from a dynamic and responsive manufacturer. There is also excellent technical back-up here, so solutions are implemented very quickly. The whole team is very impressive."

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Visit us online at www.attwater.co.uk and register your name and e-mail address and we'll send future copies of our newsletter straight to your desktop.

One lucky visitor selected at random will receive a £20 Oddbins voucher. Now that's worth clicking on for!

GOOD LUCK!

