

dialogue

CONTRACT PACKING, BRAND DESIGN, PACKAGING, STORAGE & DISTRIBUTION

ISSUE4

'Mr Big' bags a winner for glowcra^{ft}

Until recently, glowcra^{ft} focused on bagging quantities of between 10g and 1Kg. As our business expands and our customer base increases, this extra demand means the requirements have also grown. We have therefore just invested in an additional machine to allow us to fulfil more customer orders.

The new equipment – nicknamed 'Mr Big' by our production staff because of its mammoth size – is a specialist form fill and seal machine that creates packs containing quantities from 100g

right up to a whopping 5Kg. Mr Big not only creates the larger packs, but also has an attachment to produce the block-bottom that makes packs self-supporting so they sit neatly on a shelf.

With Mr Big, everything from weighing right through to sealing is computer-controlled and this greatly speeds up the packing process. We can now create more packs per minute than ever before. Thanks to the computerisation, we can also print barcodes directly onto the packaging and this works out more economical for our

customers. Because we can apply the barcode information at the last minute, we can use a universal printed film for different packs – there's no need to have a separate film for each batch. All in all, the verdict is that Mr Big is a winner!



voodoo magic Steve says...

One of the first runs for 'Mr Big' was for a long-standing customer of ours. Bait Tech have recently introduced a 2Kg bag of their new Voodoo Method Mix. Along with the new size pack they wanted a new idea to promote the launch. Bait Tech planned to include a free



gift, a moulded-plastic method feeder, so what sort of packaging could bring these two things together?

We involved the glowcra^{ft} design studio, so their creative talents combined with

our packaging expertise meant we soon found a solution. Here's how we did it.

We packed the Voodoo Mix in new 2Kg bags and flow wrapped the method feeder separately in clear film. We then took the smaller pack containing the method feeder and sealed it to the 2kg bag with a specially designed label that has a cut-out window in the middle. The gift was then highly visible on the outside of the pack and securely held in place, the label is printed highlighting the availability of the free gift and very eye catching when in store. The combination is a powerful on pack promotion utilising several of our services. Magic!

A big thank you! Without you, our customers, glowcra^{ft} would not be the very successful company it is today.

We have grown so much over the last couple of years. As well as investing in new machinery to keep us on track with your orders, we have also taken on more staff. Glowcra^{ft} now has a dedicated team of 30 permanent employees with an additional 30 agency staff that we call in to manage peak demands.



Everyone here enjoys the challenges you find for us and we all look forward to helping you again soon.

Steve Tarrant, managing director

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we're suckers for clip strips!

How products are displayed can often determine their success, as a local entrepreneur well understands. Clip strips allow retailers to place products next to other, complementary products and we're all used to seeing them in garden centres and next to checkouts.

The manufacturers of the Zip 'n' Steam microwave bag wanted their product to be displayed next to food items inside a chiller cabinet, so we had to rethink the standard clip strip. Packs of bags are attached twelve at a time to a clip strip that as well as the more usual 'S' hook also includes a sucker.

Now that's a cool solution! "Glowcraft did an outstanding job and delivered an outstanding service just when we needed the

support. Due to unforeseen circumstances we had only 3 days to pack and deliver our clients product to the rigorous specifications of ASDA.... Glowcraft made it all work so effortlessly thanks to such a friendly, flexible and professional team. We intend to carry on using their services without question".

James Hammond, Silverline Integrated Services Ltd



plant care shows customer care



Giving your customers added value and showing extra customer care needn't be expensive, as the seed and plant producer, Thompson and Morgan knows.

Each year they ship millions of young, tender plants to their facilities in the Channel Islands and from there to customers all over the UK.

Plants can take up to five days to reach the purchaser, and although during that time they are packed in special plastic cells with protective cardboard wraps, the journey could mean they arrive

looking less than their best. With some of their more valuable plants, such as fuchsias, clematis and geraniums, Thompson and Morgan now include a sachet of fertiliser to give the plant a good start.

Working from their brief, we used our horticultural knowledge and contacts to source suitable fertiliser, designed the sachets, and of course, took care of the packing. Customers appreciate Thompson and Morgan's thoughtfulness in including the fertiliser – and so do the plants.

presto pouch packing



Mr Big isn't the only machine to be added to our lines. Glowcraft has also made a major investment in another machine that automates the packing of pouches. Previously, we were filling and sealing 750,000 pouches a year using a much more manual process – the new machine allows us to produce many more pouches much more quickly.

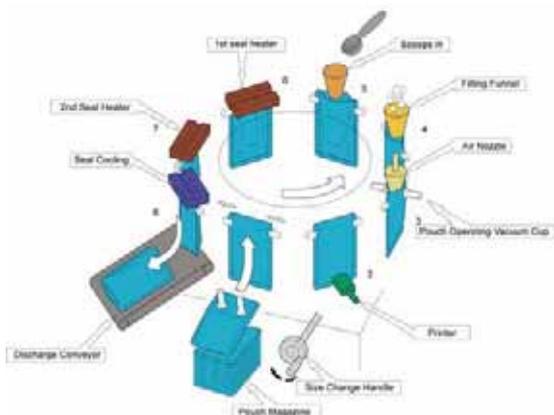
Each pouch goes through an 8-step process controlled by the machine. First, the pouch is collected from a conveyor belt and moved to the second station where it is coded. The pouch is inflated at the next station and sent on to station four to be filled with the weighed quantity of product.

Station 5 is an optional part of the

process to include extra items such as a measuring scoop. This is dropped into the pouch on top of the product and if the machine detects that the scoop has not been despatched as it should, it will stop, so there is no danger of packs being sealed without the object inside. The next two stations take care of the sealing and the last ejects the finished pack.

This machine can fill pouches ranging in size from 80-230mm wide and 100-300mm high with contents weighing between 25g and 3Kg, and depending on pack size, we could be processing as many as 45 packs per minute.

We're ready and waiting to pack anything from grass seed and garden fertilisers, to pet foods, bird food, or fishing bait. What can we pack for you?



meet Andrew Markell

production co-ordinator

Andrew joined glowcraft in June last year and has very quickly become an important member of the team. He is modest about his role, describing it as “the link between customers and production”, but this belies just how much responsibility he has. You may have spoken with Andrew if you have phoned to ask about your job – he helps customers and answers their queries. Andrew also orders all the raw materials for your job, issues production paperwork, helps to plan the production schedules and to allocate machines and people.

He's happy when a production run progresses smoothly from beginning to end. “It's down to me to make sure things happen as they should”, he explains. “I also enjoy working as part of a team where we all get on well and work together. If something does go wrong, everyone tries to solve the problem rather than attaching blame.”

Before joining glowcraft, Andrew was a time and motion analyst, so he has applied his knowledge and experience to make our production lines more efficient. “We measure hourly production

against targets based on what we know each machine should be producing. If the figures are down, we investigate why.”

Outside work, Andrew enjoys playing lawn bowls competitively, watching sport, and spending time with his wife and two sons, one of whom has autism. “Daniel needs a lot of looking after”, Andrew says, and adds that he's learnt a lot from this. “When I go out with Daniel, I need to plan carefully, anticipate potential problems and stay calm in a crisis – the same qualities I need at work!



boxing clever

multi-pack treats for pets at home

When you receive goods through the post, you probably don't give much thought to how they are packed, so long as your purchase arrives undamaged. Well, Richard Jackson, the gardening advisor at the TV shopping channel QVC, challenged us with a rather unusual requirement, and we're rather proud of the solution we devised for him.

Drawing on our expertise in the fertiliser market, we helped Richard to develop his own plant food, Flower Power. Once we've packed this into pouches, along with a scoop, the next question is how can the pouches be packed individually so they are protected from the rigours of the Royal Mail and can be handled by the

distributor's warehouse machines? The packaging we designed comprises an inner cardboard mould to hold the pouch in place. This is then placed in a sturdy cardboard outer (printed with the product name) that is folded to create a box. Other than a small amount of tape to hold the last two folds in place, we use no glue or other fixings, and of course, being cardboard, the packaging can be recycled or composted. Just what the gardener ordered!



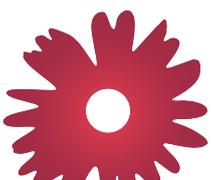
The petfood supplier, pets at home, came to us with a tall order. The company asked us to pack 12 of their bagged dog treats into a special-priced multi-pack.

That didn't sound too difficult until we learned that there were four different types of treat in varying-sized packs, the box had to be as small as possible to maximise display space and capable of supporting several similar boxes (each weighing approximately 2Kg) on top. The multi-pack box had to conform to the company's design guidelines and everything had to be complete and in store within four weeks!

Dogged determination helped us to

design packaging to fit the bill. Our multi-pack box is made of strong, rigid cardboard which is litho-lam printed in 8 colours and it is as small as it can be (which means the individual sachets will only fit if they are packed a certain way).

We then packed each of the trial-run 12,000 multi-packs into shipping cartons suitable for pets at home's pallets and shipped them to the pets at home central depot for onward distribution. Job done.



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BRAND IDENTITY STATIONERY BROCHURES&LITERATURE ADVERTISING PACKAGING DESIGN WEBSITE DESIGN POSTERS&BANNERS

supersize SwellGel

The original water-storing granules, SwellGel, have long been available as a retail product and recently, glowcroft design helped to develop this gardening aid for sale into different markets. It is the same successful product, but now it is packaged in buckets containing 1Kg, 5Kg or 25Kg of the granules. The larger sizes are targeted at commercial growers and nurseries, professional landscapers, the overseas market and customers who want to purchase by mailorder through

the internet. The design team at glowcroft redesigned the packaging for the supersizes, developed the e-commerce website and created a new leaflet for the marketing campaign. The website is one of the most comprehensive sites around and in addition to information about SwellGel, includes 'waterwise' tips to help you become more canny with water.



Take a look for yourself at www.swellgel.co.uk.

new designer for glowcroft's team

In mid April, David Birch became the latest addition to the design team at glowcroft. He brings a great deal of experience with him, having been a designer for the last 16 years. David's background is in web design and technical illustration and his web design skills in particular will

be a great asset at glowcroft. "I enjoy new and exciting projects I can get my teeth into and get a real kick out of designing something from scratch and seeing it through to completion," he says. David also gets a thrill from motorbikes and so adds: "My ideal project would probably be to create a website for a motorbike shop!" He may not have been with us for long, but already David appreciates the way members of the team work together, stating: "I'm very much motivated by the environment and the work." David has travelled widely in North America and Canada, Asia, and Europe and lived in Hong Kong for a time. "It's great to get to know other cultures and to see how things are done differently. I learnt a lot about Asian design and draw on its influences whenever a suitable project comes along." Welcome David!

www.glowcroftdesign.co.uk

restyling for Grazers

Changing a brand image is a bold move but it can alter your customers' perception of a product and the company behind it. Grazers is a harmless repellent that can be applied to crops and plants to stop rabbits, deer, pigeons and geese eating them. For years, the brand had been represented by a weeping rabbit, and when the rights to the product changed hands recently, the new owner wanted to make the product look more up-to-date. We suggested a new logo and recommended a more modern image to depict the product. At first the new owner resisted changing the rabbit, but when we showed him our concept he

soon relented and approved our ideas. As well as giving the product a new brand identity, we also created an on-line advertising campaign and designed the point-of-sale displays for the product at this year's Chelsea Flower Show. The changes have certainly made an impression with customers as sales have increased considerably since the product was relaunched with the new packaging. The rabbits, however, are still not happy.



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