

Pyrotec's 50 years of experience, trust and innovation

Pyrotec, March 2016: This year marks the 50th anniversary of Pyrotec, a privately-owned and managed business that was established in 1966 and continues to offer products and services founded on a dedication to quality, operational reliability and service excellence.

‘We have come a long way since trading in the 60s and 70s,’ says Rowan Beattie, Pyrotec’s Managing Director. ‘Our business has seen the rise and fall of the economy, the turn-around of our country’s political position, the introduction and explosion of technology, and massive shifts in consumer expectations. Through it all, we believe that we have remained steady in our approach to change, and have delivered on our promise of quality, trust, and innovation,’ he adds.

While Pyrotec is fully focused on the future and moving forward to remain at the forefront of service and product excellence, it’s worth a brief glimpse back in time to see where it all began.

In 1964 Rowan’s father, Joseph Beattie, purchased Label Processes, a supplier of self-adhesive roll-label material, hot-stamping foil, and label printing machinery. Joseph, a land-surveyor by profession, continued in his occupation to ensure a steady income for his family while Evan, Rowan’s elder brother, was entrusted with the day-to-day management of Label Processes.

Straight from school, Evan joined the company and began selling self-adhesive roll material imported from 3M, and small hot-foil printing and die-cutting machines from Milford-Astor for making self-adhesive labels in roll form. In these early days, self-adhesive materials were not made locally and this label technology was hardly known. Until then, labels were used for price marking and were written on by hand.

In 1966 with almost no demand for roll materials and label printing/die-cutting machines, Evan, just 19 years old at the time, recognised that for the company to survive he needed to broaden its customer base and began looking around for possibilities to manufacture labels on the

machines he was trying to sell. Noting stationery labels made by a local company, Pirie Appleton, he decided to produce a competitive brand. In the evenings at the family's dining room table, he designed the box to hold and dispense the labels. This was the birth of the Tower brand.

Rowan's story begins in 1967 when, straight from school like Evan, he joined Label Processes. He recalls that during those humble beginnings he was involved in virtually all of the business's production processes. Today he fondly remembers this initiation into the world of business in general and self-adhesive printing in particular. He is committed to lifelong learning and throughout his career he has always tried to learn from his contact with customers and suppliers.

During the 1970s, Label Processes and Tower Label were incorporated under the umbrella name of Synchron. However, in 1989 after Joseph's death, the company was divided into two businesses – with Rowan retaining Pyrotec (formerly Label Processes) and the Tower brand, and Evan taking over Synchron.

Leading to success

Concerning corporate values, Rowan believes that any organisation adopts the characteristics of its leader. He values above-board business dealings, innovative production focus and constantly questioning the status quo by pushing the boundaries.

Successful customer relationships are critical for sustained business success. Being close to customers enables Rowan and his team to explore their specific needs and often creates the opportunity to innovate to fill that void. Non-financial partnerships with suppliers – some spanning a number of decades – underline the value that he attaches to nurturing long-term relationships. It's these relationships that have enabled Pyrotec to create various lucrative niche markets.

Of his five sons, two are involved in the business. Timothy is Pyrotec PackMedia's General Manager while Stephen heads up Tower as the division's General Manager.

A focus on innovation

With Pyrotec's growth and its focus on innovation, its brands have evolved to include Pyrotec PackMark, the company's machinery division; Pyrotec PackMedia, which offers innovative on-pack, informational and promotional solutions; and Tower, Africa's leading supplier of self-adhesive products and accessories for the office, hardware and kids' markets.

Additionally, and in keeping with Pyrotec's focus on innovation, the latest news is the launch, in March 2016, of two new divisions – Pyrotec Finance and Pyrotec PackVerifi.

Pyrotec Finance offers a number of options to assist customers to purchase or replace their coding equipment. This includes a rental service, a rent-to-own agreement, as well as straightforward trade-in agreements.

Pyrotec PackVerifi is an exciting partnership with Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) as southern Africa's sole reseller to offer HPE's Global Product Authentication Service (GPAS). GPAS is a cloud-based brand protection track and trace service that helps organisations fight the scourge of product counterfeiting while supporting traceability throughout the supply chain.

Reputation and trust

Rowan is adamant that Pyrotec remains innovative. The company continues to sell much more than just self-adhesive labels by focusing on selling solutions. 'We continue to build on our reputation. We want to be respected as the best – both locally and internationally – based on our competence,' he insists.

A big part of Pyrotec's success is its ability to identify niche markets and concentrate its efforts there. Another element of the company's success is quality, reflected in Pyrotec's mission – Vision beyond Excellence – and all operational aspects of the business. 'Quality, operational efficiency, innovation and communication are our watch words,' Rowan points out,

adding that the company is in the process of achieving its ISO 14001:2015 accreditation.

‘Also of great importance are the relationships we’ve developed over the last 50 years between staff, suppliers and customers,’ Rowan adds. ‘With sound relationships, based on shared values, you can build a successful business and survive. We’re proud of our achievements, our experience and our history, as well as our ability to remain focused on innovation and provide service and product excellence well into the future.’

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