

INVESTING for the FUTURE

People, Machinery and Infrastructure

Board24 Ltd (Board24) is the largest sheet feeder in the UK, offering a range of products and services to meet market demands, as well as the potential to fulfill customers' specific needs. The company's vision is to consistently deliver corrugated sheet solutions to meet individual requirements, whilst providing excellent customer service and caring for its employees, customers, and the wider community.

With three dedicated sheet feeding facilities and six corrugators, Board24 provides a flexible, reliable, and efficient service. It has seven flute types available: B, C, E, M, MB,

BC, and EB, in addition to a range of paper grades across a variety of weights. Board24 consistently invests and reinvests in innovative technology and equipment to maintain its diverse offering of products and capabilities.



Dominic Drew

The business is experiencing consistent growth, which is characterized by investment across its three operational sites: Preston, Coalville, and Larkhall. However, a new purpose-built development in Scotland will eventually replace the Larkhall site upon completion. Board24's Group Managing Director, Dominic Drew, joins us to shed light on the company's growth and its vision for the future.



Scotland investment

Dominic joined Board24 in 2020, as Board24's Group Managing Director. He has a wealth of experience in various senior leadership roles which he has acquired from 28 years within the industry. With a long-term, sustainable growth strategy, Dominic aims to aid the company's growth through investment in its productivity capabilities across all three sites.

Whilst many industries experienced huge decline and stunted growth as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdowns, the packaging industry grew substantially overnight due to e-commerce demands. Having joined just before the first lockdown in the UK, Dominic faced the challenge of navigating the company through the pandemic.

"We were considered an essential business, so our operations didn't cease for a single day," Dominic reflects. "We witnessed

dramatic changes in the industry and had to overcome various difficulties that arose because of the pandemic, particularly supply chain issues. Many of our suppliers reacted brilliantly throughout the pandemic, and we have continued to work together to understand the market's changing needs."

Customer commitment

Fast-forward two years, and Board24 now has a 108,000-square-foot, purpose-built facility under construction. Based at Eurocentral in Motherwell, Scotland, the project is due for completion in December 2023. "This has been a carefully thought-out design of both the building and equipment to ensure we can manage our market and customer demands," Dominic explains. "A new BHS corrugator is set to be installed with Avanti materials handling and Cyklop pallet presses, which will significantly increase capacity."



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He continues: “As a result of the new site, we are aiming to more than double our productivity in Scotland and the surrounding areas, as well as aligning our product range for our existing and potential customers. This confirms our commitment to support our customers with high quality products and services, whilst offering security to employees and enhancing our geographical coverage.

“Whilst our project in Scotland is our current major investment, we have also had recent developments at both our Coalville and Preston sites,” Dominic adds. “We have heavily invested in new material handling equipment at both locations. Also in Preston, we have completed a 50,000-square-foot extension as part of our growth strategy, which will allow for an increased stock flow to meet growing demand”. There has also been refurbishment in Preston, which has modernized the

offices and effectively utilized space for senior management meetings and training facilities across the business.

Furthermore, a £550,000 investment in the Preston site will see the installation of 1748 solar panels on the building’s roof during the spring of 2023. Dominic sheds light on this investment: “Energy is a hot topic right now, and we have substantial energy requirements due to our operating equipment, which will impact operational, financial, and environmental aspects. Therefore, we seek to make as much progress as possible in moving towards greener energy sources.”

Investing in people

Dominic highlights: “We are not only focusing on green energy alternatives though. We have a strong desire to reduce our overall carbon footprint and will



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continue to evolve policies and opportunities as part of our environmental strategy.” Board24 expects the new site in Scotland to substantially reduce the number of vehicles travelling between Preston and Scotland, resulting in the removal of close to half a million HGV miles annually.

“Our investment is not only in equipment, but also in our people,” Dominic continues. “Having started out as a technical engineer and establishing his career over 30 years in the packaging industry, Dominic is passionate about investing in employees to raise individual aspirations. “Our employees are extremely important to the success of the business and our drive to succeed, so people will always be a key focus for us.”

“We have recently completed a phase of restructuring to enhance our skills base and align with the company’s vision moving forward,” he states. “In addition,

we are developing a new HR resource and various performance schemes, as I believe we have a duty of care to provide a platform for employees’ personal and professional development.”

Supply continuity

Board24 aims to manufacture and deliver the majority of orders within 24-to-48 hours, demonstrating its flexibility and ability to adapt to customer demands. Dominic describes the company as “a highly service-oriented business that centers customers in everything it does.” Building on this idea, he adds: “We aim to collaborate with customers to sufficiently understand their needs and align ourselves accordingly. This open approach to business enables us to build rapport and maintain relationships with new and existing customers.

“Certainly, when we are discussing new investments, our priority is to consider what our customers need both today and tomorrow. As a business, we are extremely focused on the market sector, and I feel that our product offering is absolutely aligned with current demands,” Dominic continues. “The three facilities provide us with excellent geographical coverage across the UK, which enables us to offer an extensive range of services whilst we ensure the continuity of supply to our customers.”

Sustainable growth

Board24 further expanded its product offering in 2009 when the company incorporated Cases24 in its operations. Whereas Board24 supplies sheet board for conversion, Cases24 offers finished cases for trade supply, which has enabled the company to target multiple audiences.

Dominic summarizes: “Moving forward, we are focused on being a market leader with strong pipelines in people and infrastructure. We plan to drive innovation, and continue to strive for the highest service levels achievable. This will ensure the business continues to prosper, maximizing growth, and enabling investment targets and desires to be achieved.”

Board24 has built an excellent reputation in the marketplace due to its extensive manufacturing portfolio and strong emphasis on customer service and satisfaction. Ultimately, the company’s continuous investment exemplifies its commitment to enhance its offering to the sheet plant market, and to support reliable, sustainable growth within the packaging industry. ■

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Dominic Drew - Managing Director
Board24 Ltd

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