

Outstanding success of “Meet the Buyer Event”

We have now received the interim survey on the outcome of the event we organised in May 2007.

To date the event has generated at least £4,784,345 for the NW AFM companies who attended.

The event attracted 47 buyers who met with 52 suppliers.

The buyers represented a wide range of markets, both geographical markets (Canada, Austria, Denmark, Kenya, Sri Lanka China, Pakistan, Belgium, Germany, Serbia & Montenegro, India, Poland and Italy were represented) and the area of business (buyers represented performance fabrics, medical fabrics, polymers, technical textiles and new technologies such as fireproof and bulletproof fabrics).

The selling companies who responded to the 6 month survey gained an average of 5.9 quality sales leads from the buying companies they met.

‘There was some notable business which has accrued between suppliers at the event. Indeed, £2,000,000 of new business is being transacted between 2 NW AFM companies.’

From the exit survey, both buyers and suppliers rated their likelihood of doing business positive (100% of buyer said they would definitely or probably make business with suppliers, and 100% of suppliers rated their likelihood of doing business as satisfactory or better).

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We plan to organise a similar event during 2008, around higher margin products in the same area of protective clothing and technical fabrics.

Caldeira Ltd:

A Success Story in Knowsley, China, and the USA.

Caldeira Ltd is the brain-child of its entrepreneurial managing director, 37 year old Tony Caldeira. The current business is acknowledged as a UK leader in the field of Household Textiles and is Europe’s leading cushion supplier.

Growing from a market stall in Liverpool the business experienced regular annual expansion with a turnover of £500,000 in 1997 increased to one of £5 million in 2003 rising to £10 million by 2007. 50% of the company’s current output is now exported. In an industry that is challenging, especially on margins, current pre-tax profits are a healthy £1 million.



The entire history of the young company has been one of continuous change. Caldeira has not been content to think purely in the context of local demand. Indeed, whilst a number of companies have been apprehensive about competing in the Far East, he has embraced opportunity with both enthusiasm and determination. Sensibly the approach has been on a calculated step by step basis. Caldeira quickly assessed the fact that Chinese fabric was around half the price being paid for material from continental European suppliers. In addition to lower labour costs Chinese producers were also benefiting from their Government’s generous export rebates which enabled them to sell at cost. Fabrics and other materials were then brought from China and processed at Knowsley. The next step was then to undertake a similar approach in China itself, before moving to a joint venture and then a majority ownership of a purpose-built 250,000 sq ft complex in 2003.

In 2007 Caldeira also opened a sales suite in the USA on New York’s Fifth Avenue. This has been a great success with the showroom displaying the company’s UK and Chinese products to North American volume retailers. The supply chain established is considered second to none. The whole range of the company’s global production is promoted in New York and it is a considerable compliment to the Knowsley plant that there is a high take-up of UK cushion products.

Tony Caldeira’s business philosophy is that to stand still is to die!