

# Customer Connections

*Happy New Year!*

## News and views from the team at Thermoseal Group

It's been a record year for us here at Thermoseal Group and we're ready for 2009. In this newsletter you'll find our latest news, a round-up of some of the key advancements we've made this year and a preview of some of the developments planned to ensure that we keep business afloat over the next twelve months and beyond.

### Gwain shares plans for 2009 and beyond



MD Gwain Paterson

It's been yet another great year at Thermoseal. We've continued to grow the business and expand the team and we've

purchased a new warehouse in Wigan which has helped to enhance our service to North West customers.

Behind the scenes a large proportion of our resources have been dedicated to advancing systems and procedures which will improve deliveries and raise our customer service standards. As a result, we now have 20% more customer accounts than we did this time last year. If you are one of these customers, welcome to Thermoseal Group.

In terms of the range of sealed unit components we offer (over 2,000), we're continually expanding this for two reasons: Firstly, to access the latest innovations on the market; Secondly, to ensure that we provide a choice of products to give customers alternative solutions when looking to make cost-

savings. Increasing raw material costs combined with the negative exchange rate movement and the general downturn in the economy isn't doing any of us any favours.

So in 2009, cost-saving is definitely the theme. Tightening our belts is an inevitable job we're all going to have to do to maintain our product margin, whichever level of the supply chain we are at. If we don't do this, there's no future for our business or industry. Two of our biggest competitors have learnt this lesson the hard way and no longer survive in business to tell the tale.

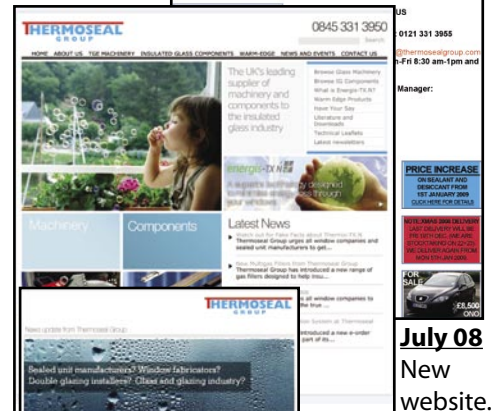
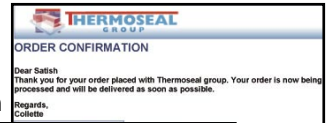
We're taking every step to not follow these competitors, so we've had to make a few price increases to be applied in January (you should have your letter by now). However, **we will decrease the price of Self Adhesive Perma-Led in January** following the fall in the price of lead on the LME. Please be assured that in the long-run we're aiming to provide a quality product and service while helping to reduce both our costs and ultimately your purchase costs.

### Some highlights from 2008

#### New Systems to support our customers:

##### Feb 08

New e-order confirmation



##### July 08

New website.

##### Dec 08

New e-Newsletter providing relevant product and industry information.

#### More Changes:

We've expanded our range of delivery vehicles and supersized our trucks to



meet the increasing number and size of IG components orders.

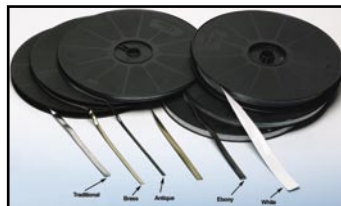


Left: New Area Sales Executive Debbie Coulson joined our North West team. Below: New Wigan branch purchased in July 2008.



### Decorative lead prices fall by 10% in Jan 2009!

We're passing on our cost-savings to you, so your lead prices will drop by 10% on orders placed from January 2009.



*Wishing you All the best for 2009!*

### Also featuring in this issue...

- Complying with Building Regulations 2010.
- 'A' Rated Windows with Thermix-TX.N.
- New Product Update and What's New in 2009.
- Season's Greetings from all at Thermoseal.



# Looking to the future...

## Complying with Building Regulations 2010

A technical question increasingly being asked by sealed unit manufacturers is – what configuration of sealed unit do we have to make for our windows, or our clients windows, to conform to the changes in Building Regulations in 2010? This on the face of it seems a simple question but like most questions is far more complicated than first appears.

### WHAT'S CHANGING?

The proposed changes to Building Regulations relating to the performance of all windows are due to be phased in during 2010, 2013 and 2016.

These have not been finally decided as yet but, from a paper produced by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), it would appear that for new dwellings in 2010, BFRC Energy Ratings are not at the moment being considered but a centre pane U value of 0.9 is and may ultimately become the accepted minimum until 2013 when it would drop further to 0.7!!.

### TRIPLE GLAZING?



means conclusive as yet and hence the reason for the complicated nature

In order to reach this figure a triple-glazed, Xenon or Krypton gas-filled unit with two low-emissivity panes would probably be required! The implications of such a drastic move are mind-boggling, however, this is by no

of this subject. BFRC Window Energy Ratings are a much more logical way to go as they incorporate, amongst other things, solar gain and therefore negate the necessity for such drastic measures such as triple glazed units at this stage. It would therefore make more sense at the moment to lobby the industry and government to go down the Window Energy Rating route in order to cut back on CO<sup>2</sup> emissions.

### QUESTIONS?

For further information on the issues that will need to be addressed in the aforementioned review of the Building Regulations energy efficiency requirements (Part L) for new dwellings, you can visit the Communities and Local Government Web site at :-

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/Energyefficiencyrequirements.pdf>

or

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/doc/br-energyefficiency.doc>

### MANUFACTURING RATED UNITS?

BFRC Energy ratings are also proving to be a valuable sales tool for window installation companies during this period of economic downturn and these ratings are also coming to the forefront in trade magazines.

Changes in unit components will depend greatly on the frame type or profile used and is too complicated without discussion. However, it would appear that warm edge spacer bar,

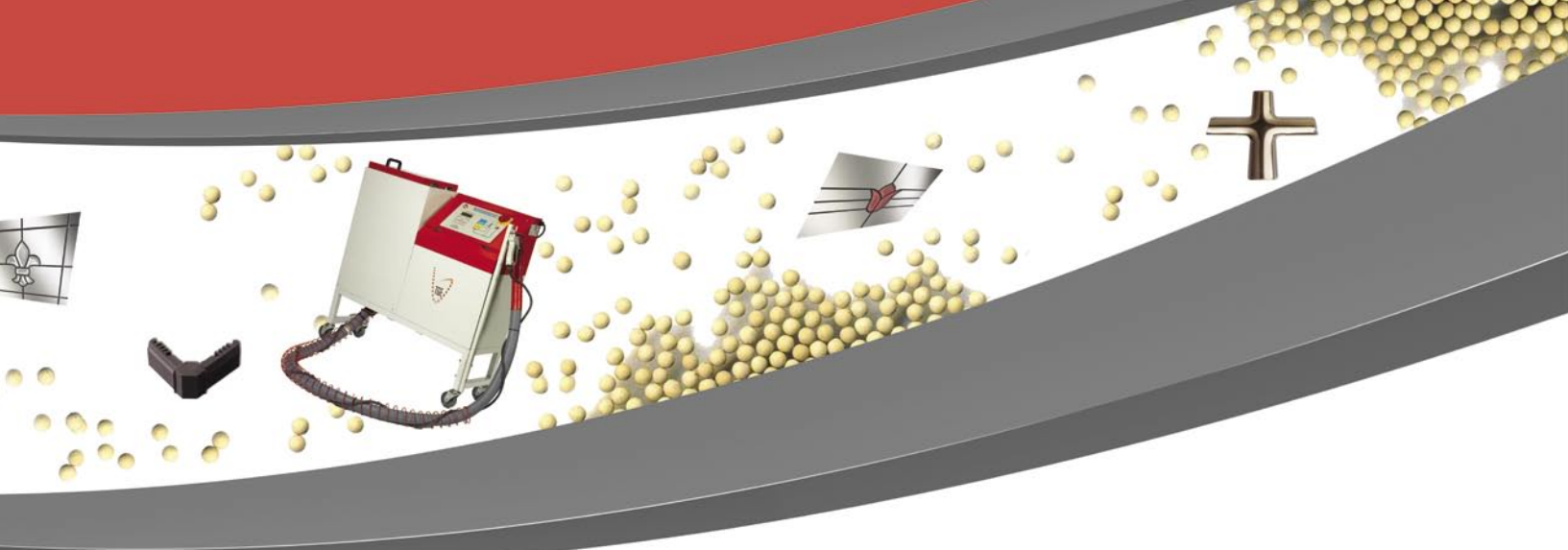


various coated and speciality glasses and sometimes argon gas may have to be used in conjunction with the frame to attain the best possible rating.

### NEW REGULATIONS?

Frame manufacturers also need to consider the imminent European Standard for Windows & Pedestrian Door sets – EN 14351. To legally trade after February 2009 (or February 2010 if the proposed 12 month extension is approved) manufacturers will have to comply with the minimum requirements. This subject is, yet again, fairly lengthy.

We have found over a period of many years that the directors and consultants from the industrial consultancy company CENSolutions Ltd are always available to give free and impartial advice on any subject related to the fenestration industry. You can contact them via their web site [www.censolutions.com](http://www.censolutions.com) where you can obtain details of the consultant covering your geographical area to get advice relating to your particular situation.



## Windowplus gets 'A' rated windows with Thermix-TX.N

Photo: Robert Tierney, general manager for Windowplus presents the new 'A' rated window.



having worked closely with sealed unit manufacturer Strathclyde Insulating Glass Limited based in Lanarkshire, this standard has been upgraded by altering the construction of the sealed unit.

PVCu since 1984. And with the support of Strathclyde Insulating Glass Limited, it can now offer both 'A' and 'C' rated windows as required by customer specification.

Windowplus Home Improvements Limited in Glasgow was the first window manufacturer in Scotland to achieve energy rated windows in August 2006 and now, with the help of Thermix-TX.N warm edge spacer bar, has introduced the prestigious 'A' rated casement window to their range.

The new 'A' rated windows are achieved by adding low iron glass, Argon gas filling to the cavity and replacing the standard aluminium spacer with Thermix-TX.N high performance spacer bar. All sealed units are professionally constructed and gas filled to EN1279 part 3 standards which is now a legal requirement for achieving an official 'A' rating from the BFRC.

Robert Tierney, general manager for Windowplus says: "We're in full support of the Window Energy Rating (WER) scheme and the current effort to raise the quality of windows and so we've worked with our trusted supplier, Strathclyde Insulating Glass Limited to make sure that we offer the TX.N warm-edge 'A' rated option for our customers. We've always believed in offering our customers the highest standard windows we can, so we keep a close eye on current regulations and available market options to ensure that we provide the best windows available."

Windowplus manufactures a standard frame with a BFRC rating of 'C'. Now,

Windowplus has manufactured top quality windows, doors, conservatories and vertical sliders in

## New Products in 2008 and what's in store for 2009

In 2008 we introduced a range of products including: our own range of **MultiGas Fillers** to suit all manufacturing requirements; the **Gas Hole Punch**



**Tool Kit** for punching holes into spacer bar; Additional Georgian bar and fittings - **System 2, Aluminium Surface Mount Georgian** and many other fixtures and fittings.



A whole array of other items were also added to enhance our range of 2,000+ tools and components:



**HB Fuller Sealants; Hot Melt Guns** for plugging gas filling holes with Hot melt

sealant, a new **Digital Thermometer** as well as many more.

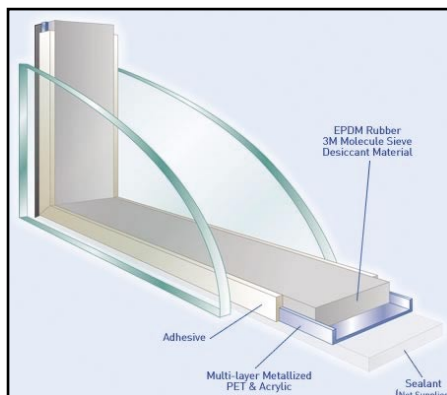
**2009** will bring a whole raft of new products including: an **expansion of the warm edge range** incorporating a new foam spacer from Air-Tight™ Spacer Products Glasslam.

The production of this new product is headed up by Gerhard Reichert and will be on sale in the New Year (see information in the press from Gerhard).

Warm-applied moisture-curing sealant, **HL-5160 from HB Fuller** will also be on sale. This is intended for single seal applications and could pass EN1279 part 3 with foam and composite spacers.

Budget price **Hotmelt HL-5145 from HB Fuller** will be available from March. A new range of cloth tapes will be available which will provide a huge saving on current products.

**New Aluminium Surface Mount Georgian Bar** will be available in various foil-finish options.





## Sales and Marketing 2009

Sales Director,  
Mark Hickox

It isn't often that any industry is given a helping hand, but the proposed changes in Part 'L' Building Regulations combined with the introduction of HIPs packs ensures that not only is the building industry considering its choice of windows, but the homeowner must now take into account how their replacement windows can impact on the overall energy efficiency of their home.

Therefore, if you aren't already doing it, we're recommending that you make sure you're offering at least one warm edge option that will make a C+ energy rated window. This is the perfect opportunity to differentiate and offer a 'unique' product that will provide a solution to the emerging warm edge market.

Although organisations selling only one warm edge product would have you believe their product is your complete

solution, it is the whole construction of the unit that you can put your mark on so why not offer your own unique brand using whichever components and construction that best suits your current manufacturing setup? As long as you're making a gas-tight sealed unit constructed using quality products that will stand the test of time, you're already creating an energy efficient window.

We're expanding our own range of warm edge options, so stay ahead and look out for what's new in 2009. We have full programme of marketing activity planned with a massive focus on warm edge products and tools to help you and your customers sell your warm edge solution into the market.

We're happy to help or maybe even host seminars for you and your customers. We will also provide speakers and our marketing material where we can. Please give us a call.



*Season's Greetings to all...*



We hope you all had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year full of fun and relaxation so that you're ready to join us in another busy year in 2009.

We'd like to thank you all for your business and support in 2008 and we

look forward to a long and prosperous relationship and future business for us all over the forthcoming years.

Please also join us in a thank you to all of the Thermoseal Group team for their hard work and strong customer commitment in 2008.

### Customer Surveys 2009

Thank you to all of those customers who returned our Customer Satisfaction Surveys. We received almost 100 surveys which we are now looking at with a view to updating and improving our products and service. Your feedback is invaluable.

### Ipod Winner

Congratulations to Helen from Unit Mate Limited. Your brand new 8G Nano Chromatic Ipod will be on its way to you shortly (purple as requested).

### Thermix-TX.N gets a 10-year Warranty Certificate



Ingrid Quel from Ensinger presenting the certificate to Gwain and Mark at Glasstec 2008 in Dusseldorf.

ENSINGER, manufacturer of Thermix-TX.N spacer tube, has presented us with its 10-year legal warranty certificate instead of the standard 5-year warranty.

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