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Key Data

Turnover - GBP 50m in 2009

Growth rate - 20% in the last 12 months

Investment - A minimum of GBP 3 million p.a.

Customised bottles for the Crusha range

Esterform supplies customised PET bottles for Crusha, the number 1 brand in the UK for flavouring milkshakes.

Silver Spoon's Crusha is the market leader for both the retail and the food service sectors in the UK.

New and improved recipes, focusing on healthier, fruitier flavours have been launched in the 500ml, 740ml and 1 litre bottles supplied by Esterform.



1 litre, 500ml & 750ml bottles for Crusha



Innovative, creative, flexible, focused, niche and modern

Esterform's strategy for the future

During the last 12 months, the bursting of inflated asset and credit bubbles in national and international markets have led to an unprecedented slowdown in developed economies, with the UK particularly hard hit.

Prediction is a hard task at the best of times. Given the economic climate at present, a company needs to be prepared for a very wide range of possible outcomes.

Esterform:

- Continues to be flexible, focused and innovative.
- Spreads risk by serving a diverse range of customers, with a wide range of PET bottles and preforms
- Makes optimum use of new materials to gain an advantage in the marketplace
- Ensures that their facilities and product range match rapidly changing market requirements

These difficult economic conditions also bring market opportunities.

Esterform Packaging intends to take full advantage of these opportunities, with a host of new products currently under development.

These will ensure that Esterform remains a leading edge supplier in PET packaging.



Household Bottles



New laboratory... See page 4



Innovative glass like bottles for beverages - see page 3.

News Flash

New business from Sainsbury

Key Esterform customer Daniels Foods has won substantial new own label business at leading UK supermarket chains for their fresh pressed juices and smoothies.

Bottle sizes are 250ml, 500ml, 750ml, 1 litre and 1.5 litres.

The Sainsbury's "Taste the difference" chilled juices in particular account for a significant share of new business for Esterform. All these bottles are in 100% post-consumer RPET. See page 3 for PCR news.





New standards in the range

For many years Esterform has produced customised PET trigger spray bottles for specialist suppliers of car care products and of household fluids. With the steady increase in demand for PET trigger spray packs, Esterform has created a new “family” of 500ml, 750ml and 1000ml trigger spray bottles, to be supplied as standards.

The superior performance, economics and environmental acceptability of PET in comparison with HDPE bottles, or with aerosol packs,



The new standard trigger spray range

is supporting the success of this new range.

Initial standard colours for the 500ml bottle are clear and solid white. The white version is already in use for a range of garden products (the item in the box on page 4 refers). There is interest too in the bottle for the car care sector. Later in the year, the 750ml and 1000ml bottles will go into production in clear; plus solid white, red, green and blue.

Another new household standard is the 500ml Handwash Bottle (E171-b-03). Designed with a 28-410 neck for a range of closures, it is most often used with a pump dispenser.



A versatile 500ml Handwash bottle

New PET preforms, as well as bottles, have also been added to the list of standards in the recent year. In particular, Esterform now has a number of preforms for blowing bottles for household, DIY and car care products. These include 32g preforms with a 28-410 neck, with and without anti back-off. They are therefore suitable for blowing bottles for a number of very different closures, including child resistant (CRC) and trigger spray. A 28-415 version of this preform is also available.

At the same time, Esterform offers an unrivalled range of 28mm and 38mm neck bottles for water, soft drinks, juices, juice drinks, smoothies and dairy drinks.

A very different preform design now in the standard range is the 250g 55mm snap-on neck preform for one way water cooler bottles. The preform is designed to blow 13 litre and 15 litre PET bottles to fit standard water coolers.

In total Esterform supplies a unique combination of standard off-the-shelf PET products – especially where bottles are concerned. The new Esterform web site lists the preforms that are available, and provides drawings of all the standard bottle drawings. A detailed report on the preforms and bottles for water coolers can also be downloaded.

One way PET bottles for water coolers

The 250g 55mm snap-on neck PET preform from Esterform is suitable for blowing 13 litre and 15 litre bottles for standard water coolers.

Key advantages of one way PET cooler bottles in comparison with multi-trip Polycarbonate (PC) can be summarised as follows:

- No collection or cleaning of bottles is needed. The use of harsh chemicals and the complexity of a deposit system, is thus avoided
- There is a well established PET recycling chains for bottles.
- Blowing PET preforms in line on the filling site into one-way bottles reduces logistics costs and minimises energy usage therein

Energy costs for conversion and transportation are also minimised by the lightness and strength of PET. Moreover, in contrast to polycarbonate, PET has no association with Bisphenol A .

Overall, the energy and hygiene costs of returnable cooler bottles in PC are beginning to outweigh the environmental advantages of returnability.





Who says plastic can't be sexy....?

An important part of new product development at Esterform is testing out possible concepts. A typical example of this is in the area of glass replacement. Over the last few years, Esterform had observed significant increases in the price of glass bottles and occasional



Examples of the high end concept bottles developed for water and other beverages

supply difficulties. A project team therefore looked at creating a high end concept 1 litre PET bottle, that could compete with the aesthetic and quality appeal of glass. The result was an elegant new shape that looks good in any table setting, but has all the practical advantages of PET. Some typical examples are shown in the illustrations above. A number of customers are currently evaluating the bottles and feedback is excellent.

Materials Update

“HotPET” Launch

In order to continue to thrive in a changing market, optimum use of new materials is a high priority for Esterform. New PET resin formulations have been developed that offer better dimensional stability under certain hot fill conditions. Up till now, glass or polypropylene (PP) has dominated this sector. Hot fill PET technology existed, but at a relatively high price, with design limitations.

Both glass and polypropylene have disadvantages from the point of view of the major supermarkets. Glass offers limited options for weight reduction and poses a safety hazard. Polypropylene has good physical properties, but cannot as yet be recycled and does not have the clarity of PET.

The new PET formulation is a modified co-polyester. The alloy produced imparts better resistance to heat, and superior mechanical properties, especially in comparison with monolayer PET. Trials include pasteurisation over 20 minutes at 72°C, and hot fill at 90°C, and have been very successful. Typical products (all filled without preservatives) have been water flavoured with natural ingredients, juice drinks and vitamin enhanced drinks and spicy sauce. Progress is being made towards commercialisation in market driven by the need to maintain shelf life without the use of preservatives.

Post Consumer Recycled PET (PCR)

Intrinsically PET is a very environmentally friendly material, that is 100% recyclable. Strapping, fibres, and other materials can be produced from post-consumer recycled PET (PCR). However, consumers have always been eager to see bottle to bottle recycling.

Esterform has been investigating sources of PCR for the last 2 years. Up to 15 PCR materials have been trialled. The key issues are material colour, material stability and food grade status. PCR colours tend to give a yellowish tinge to the bottles. Material instability (for example as regards IV) can make it very difficult to process, whether blended with virgin, or as a 100% recycled material.

At present, Esterform has only been able to qualify 2 PCR materials (and one of these is no longer available). A limited quantity of the one qualified material is available for 2009, and it is this that is used for the 100% PCR bottles filled at Daniels for Sainsbury.

Despite the difficulties in handling the PCR currently available, Esterform continues their programme to find the best possible PCR available for all those customers who want a percentage of PCR in their bottles.



Doff launches new products

Doff Portland are the largest independent manufacturer of garden chemicals in the UK.

Their range includes insecticides, weed-killers, plant foods and other garden products.

To date the trigger spray bottles used for a wide range of their products have been in HDPE. However, a number of their brands are now being launched in the new standard 500ml PET trigger bottle from Esterform.

The use of PET in comparison with HDPE leads to a 30% reduction in pack weight and a 20% improvement in shelf utilisation for the finished product.

Later in the year the proposed 750ml and 1 litre PET standards from Esterform will be utilised for more of the Doff range.

Watch this space for more news!



White 500ml trigger bottle



28-410 neck with anti-back off

The new laboratory

Unlike most PET converters, Esterform has a full on-site PET characterisation facility. This laboratory was originally opened to provide internal quality assurance for Esterform products.



The Laboratory is responsible for ensuring the quality and consistency of the Esterform brand, throughout the production-supply chain. A close relationship with approved suppliers and a Quality Management System certified and registered to ISO 9001:2000 standards, supports this process. The Laboratory's unique system of Primary and Secondary analysis ensures total quality control from production through to delivery.

Externally, a PET analysis is offered to Esterform's customers.

This gives an exceptional level of service, offering customers the opportunity to discuss any aspect of PET properties or performance with a member of the technical department.

In addition, the Laboratory supports new product initiatives, by assessing the mechanical, physical and functional aspects of containers. This supports the design, development and introduction of new PET materials and bottle design technology for Esterform customers. The "Materials Update" article refers.

Stop Press - Stop Press - Stop Press - Stop Press - Stop Press

Bottles in Esterform's new HotPET material are now out in the market place! A pasteurised, naturally flavoured water in 500ml HotPET bottles is being launched in a major supermarket. At the same time, a leading flavoured syrup for coffee is also being supplied in a HotPET bottle. Watch the Esterform web site for future developments.

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SunnyD 1250 ml bottles



New business with SunnyD

SunnyD launches in PET

Since the SunnyD brand was acquired by the Sunny Delight Beverages Company the product has been the subject of a major re-design and re-launch.

SunnyD now contains 70% fruit juice concentrate with no added sugar and no synthetic flavourings and additives. It is targeted at families as a healthy alternative to other soft drinks.

The newly formulated beverage is being filled on a new high speed aseptic filling line. To fit the new brand image, and differentiate the product from the past, the bottles have been re-designed in PET.

The product brief for Esterform was to fit the concept shape from SunnyD to 1250ml, 330ml and 250ml bottles- but also to run smoothly on the filling lines.

Bottles for the UK are in clear. However for France a carefully matched translucent white was required.