

# mister blisters' new growth



AFTER MANY YEARS OF 'ROUTINELY' SHAVING EACH MORNING **GARY BRISCOE**, M.D. OF MANCHESTER-BASED THERMOFORMING SPECIALISTS MISTER BLISTER, HAS STARTED TO GROW A BEARD...

I don't know why I took this decision, but after I missed shaving for a couple of mornings it just seemed the right time to go for it and let the stubble flourish. Now, a week later people have started to notice the difference and to my surprise most of the comments have been complimentary. It could be that people are just being sympathetic and think that I am going through some form of mid-life crisis or trying to hide the impending signs of aging, but as my teenage son thinks my beard looks 'cool' and my partner thinks she has got a new man in her life (I'm not sure if that's a positive!), I am prepared to keep it for a while.

The timing of his follicle frenzy has proved to be perversely beneficial, as I find that, in times of deep contemplation, I have started to stroke my facial fur like some wise old sage and that somehow this helps me to focus on the best way to approach the challenges that confront our industry.

With an election looming, the SNP pushing for another referendum and the impact of Brexit still not truly understood, I am sure that many UK business leaders are also in deep contemplation about the potential consequences of such an unstable environment. However, after several days of beard therapy, I've concluded that the current economic climate has also created plenty of export opportunities for UK packaging manufacturers.

## HIRSUTES YOU

UK manufacturing has an excellent reputation for innovation and quality, but sadly over recent years cheaper, inferior quality imports have established a foothold in the UK. Recently, the impact of Far Eastern supply has dissipated as logistics costs have

increased dramatically and the lack of flexibility and long lead times have forced customers to look for more localised supply. As a result of Brexit, the plummeting exchange rate has meant that our prices are even more competitive and this is creating further European export opportunities for UK manufacturers.

With distributors already in Spain, France and Ireland, Mister Blister have taken full advantage of these opportunities by recently reaching agreement with Swedish-based packaging supplier Snap-pack to supply their patented Virtuweld 'tamper-resistant' blister pack range throughout Scandinavia.

European companies are not as sceptical about us leaving as I thought they might be and appear more focused on taking advantage of the current exchange rate benefits. They are keen to meet up with UK manufacturers as they know that there will never be a better opportunity to buy innovative, quality products at such competitive prices.

Apart from our Swedish agreement, Mister Blister are also in negotiation with prospective distributors in Italy and Germany and are about to launch our first international (Spanish) e-commerce site".

## BY VIRTU OF...

The continued success of our Virtuweld blister range, both in the UK and Europe as well as the expansion of our Caterline range of catering disposables has led to the company investing in a new high speed Illig RD 74 thermoforming machine and we are also awaiting the imminent arrival of a Bandera PET extrusion line. Having successfully manufactured our packs from PVC for over a decade it has become clear that larger customers and some international markets are insisting that all thermoforming products should be



Mister Blisters' new Bandera PET extrusion line



Before the beard - Gary Briscoe meets new Swedish distributor

made from PET. In order for us to maintain our competitive prices and lead times it is essential that we produce and recycle our own material on-site.

The new PET line represents a significant investment for the company, but I was delighted with the financial support we received for the project. Immediately, after the banking collapse a few years ago, funding support became almost impossible, but now the banks are actively looking for investment opportunities and providing you have a robust business plan and credible cash flow forecast, relatively low cost finance is available. We were also delighted to receive some funding support from The Greater Manchester Export Growth Fund and I would recommend that any company looking for support should contact their regional Business Growth Hub to see what level of support and advice is available to them.

## HAIR RAISING

Mister Blister have also recently appointed Ian Rylands as Factory Manager to oversee all the developments at our site. For our business to continue to expand it is vital that we have the right people in place and having worked at Flexipol for over 20-years, Ian has a wealth of knowledge and experience and is a welcome addition to our management team. Ian hasn't yet fully appreciated the benefits that a beard can bring to the decision making process, but I will keep working on him... even our Sales Manager, Dawn, wishes she could grow one!

[www.mr-blisters.com](http://www.mr-blisters.com)



Mister Blister's innovative 750cc bowl with one-ounce portion pot