A winning partnership
Plastribution & Sumika Polymer Compounds (UK)

As a market leader, Plastribution’s core business is the distribution of thermoplastic raw materials for the injection moulding, extrusion and blow moulding industries. Sourced globally from a range of major petrochemical producers, the company supplies a full range of polyolefins, styrenics, engineering polymers, specialties, masterbatches and custom compounds for a range of industries and markets including: packaging, construction, automotive, medical, industrial electronic and electrical applications.

Developing partnerships
Developing partnerships is central to Plastribution’s business model. In providing a highly effective interface between UK plastic processors and a global network of leading polymer producers, Plastribution can deliver the highest levels of commercial and technical support, together with a vast product portfolio of thermoplastic grades that are suitable for most applications.

One such relationship is with Hampshire-based Sumika Polymer Compounds (UK) (SPC). As a producer, SPC are part of a worldwide business group supplying high performance thermoplastic engineering compounds. Founded in 2007, SPC was the result of a consortium purchase of the Asahi Thermofil compounding companies in the UK and France; the consortium shareholding consisting of Sumitomo Chemical Group (55%), Itochu Corporation (20%) and Toyo Ink (25%).

Global supplier
With their primary aim concentrated on becoming a driving force in Europe, SPC’s objectives are centered on: expanding the successful Thermofil® compound in the Automotive and Domestic appliance markets, grade range extension and strengthening their position as a “global supplier” by developing partnerships with major global customers in their core markets.

Business transfer opportunity
Whilst SPC focused on major account development, it was very important to ensure the service experience of SPC’s smaller customers was maintained and enhanced. On account of the long-standing relationship between Plastribution and SPC, a business transfer opportunity was discussed: the essence of which would see SPC transferring ten smaller accounts to Plastribution, who would in turn provide an enhanced supplier service.

It was felt that Plastribution’s sales infrastructure, UK coverage and marketplace reputation would provide the best possible continuity for servicing these customers going forward.

Plastribution conducted a review
Six months after the transfer process was complete, Plastribution conducted a review and compiled feedback from the ten SPC customers involved. The overall consensus was that although the service support from SPC was highly rated, customers felt that given the nature of their business, their stock requirements were being managed faster (next working day delivery) and with much increased flexibility.

Let’s make it work
“Overall this business transfer in conjunction with SPC represents a win-win situation all round and demonstrates the strong ethic we place on building trusted business relationships. The move maximises the best from both parties, with, quite rightly, the customer emerging as the clear winner,” said Plastribution’s Mike Boswell.

“We seek to innovate at all times. In this case, we arrived at a favourable solution that ourselves, SPC and their customers could benefit from, making it easier for us all to do business. We are used to solving problems, making something work or getting something to market – it’s a big part of where our strap line comes from – ‘let’s make it work’.”

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— Mike Boswell MD