

# R&D exhibits design model for growth

From humble toolmaker to a supplier of complete solutions including design, prototyping, engineering and tooling, R&D Integrated Solutions in Plastics introduced its new look to visitors at NPE and mooted the possibility of replicating the US model in the UK now that the re-branding has proved successful.

"We're changing the industry," explained global marketing director Robert Schiavone. "In the US we have a full package from concept to production tool following the addition of Leverage last year, which provided industrial design. The US has expanded from PET tooling to custom injection, silicone and medical markets."

Earlier this year, the company established a production laboratory called the PSL (Product Solutions Lab) in the UK to extend its capabilities for product design in the European market and, according to Alan Tolley, R&D managing director for Europe, the US is being used as a role model for the UK.

"The US facility ran out of territory so had to diversify and steer customers away from a belief that we are simply just another 'me too' toolmaker. The UK has lots of territorial growth potential, such as Poland and Greece," he said.

But the Leverage (design) side does interest Tolley and he is keen to target more

brand owners: "Brand owners know what they want so are good to work with. Being a tool builder first and a designer second, like us, is an advantage because a package might get to the converter from the designer

and then bounce back as it's not feasible. We tie all of this together."

The UK laboratory is fully automated with full and pilot tools and is home to a Nissei ASB 70DPH injection stretch blow moulder, which enables R&D engineers to have their customers see the tooling running on a line, giving them an advantage.

"Single stage blow moulding is our core business in Europe, but not so much in the US," said Tolley.

"We are enjoying the growth of Central Europe and the Middle East with food, beverage and personal care sectors all going well, driven by machinery improvements."

Despite the fact that R&D relocated from a leased 16,000 sq ft facility in the UK to a purpose-built 27,500 sq ft one, Tolley admits that the company is considering opportunities in South East Asia and may establish more satellite offices like the existing ones in France and Czech Republic.

"We now can do 40 per cent more work in the UK facility. Our competitors in Europe can only do 'part' of what we do," said Tolley.



*R&D's chief executive vice president of operations, Rex Luchtel (left) and European managing director Alan Tolley are spearheading the company's transformation into a supplier of complete solutions*