

Interface - The knowledge connection for business

Case Study

John White & Son Ltd.

Research Collaboration

2008

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Supports a Fife-based family business expand its product range

John White & Son, a Fife-based family business, is recognised as the oldest independent weighing company in the UK. The present Managing Director, Edwin White, is the eighth generation to be involved in the business since its foundation by his ancestor John White in 1715.

Throughout the 20th century, the company expanded its range of industrial weighing equipment to include retail scales and pre-set weighing machines, from which the company's flagship product, the Cartomat checkweigher was developed in the 1960's and used widely across the spirit bottling industry.

By the 1970's, with advances in technology and mechanical weighing machines being phased out, the company transitioned to electronic weighing, pioneering in the manufacture and development of a broad range of electronic weighing equipment.

However, the last decade has heralded a transformation in the use of weighing systems as the industry embraces huge technological advances in

engineering software and in particular, the use of mobile weighing technology.

The commercial automotive industry remains a strong market for the company and John White is now expanding its product range to develop a new suite of mobile weighing systems for a wide range of automotive applications.

In order to develop its mobile weighing systems for a range of vehicle types, the company's Research and Development have focused on areas such as electronics, design, engineering, software, instrumentation and prototype development.

John White initially sought assistance from Technology Ventures Scotland – the independent body tasked with brokering Knowledge Transfer and R&D commercialisation opportunities in Scotland, who in turn referred John White to Interface – The knowledge connection for business.

Interface brokered links to David Kennedy, an academic working at University of the West of Scotland



Mobile Weighing on Recycling Vehicle. For more information on John White & Son, please visit www.johnwhiteandson.com

"We are delighted with the progress of this collaboration. By combining the input from our own staff who have long experience in the field of weighing with the knowledge and expertise from the University of the West of Scotland, we are able to cut down on the time needed to develop our new range of products. Using Interface has been of great benefit and it can do the same for other companies in a similar position to ourselves".

Edwin White, Managing Director,
John White & Son (Weighing
Machines) Ltd.



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School of Engineering and Science (formerly the School of Science and Technology at Bell College, Hamilton). David said "We had a strong interest the instant we saw this enquiry as it had similar requirements to another project we were working on. I had also undertaken a number of other knowledge transfer projects, so had the knowledge and experience John White sought".

Following discussions between the academic and the company they decided to apply for grant funding from The Scottish Government under the SCORE programme – a scheme designed to support R&D projects jointly undertaken between public sector research bodies (such as Higher Education Institutes, Research Institutes, and Scottish SMEs).

The funding application was successful and the 18 month collaborative project between John White and the University of West of Scotland started early April 08 to work on a prototype that will herald the next generation of advanced electronic weighing systems and allow the company to further develop its manufacturing capabilities.



About Interface - The knowledge connection for business

There is a wealth of world-class technology, skills and research facilities available within Scotland's universities and research institutes.

With established links to thousands of world-class leading experts, Interface finds and introduces companies to the perfect academic partner.

Interface overcomes the challenge facing companies in understanding what is available or who to contact

in academia, for R&D or expertise capabilities by matching relevant expertise to specific business requirements.

Collaborating with academic partners brings significant business benefits:

- Develop innovative new products, services and processes
- Improve performance using technological advances
- Increase competitive advantage in key markets

- Enhance profitability in existing and new markets

Many companies don't know that innovative solutions to help their business grow can be developed with academic assistance.

Interface is here to help make the right connections for businesses.

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