

Staying power



Staytite is keen to share its enviable experience in the fastener trade and help customers tackle technological challenges. MD Andrew Black talks Brexit, the state of the fastener market and looking to the future with **Jonathon Harker**...

Since 1978, Staytite has been supplying fasteners and naturally has accumulated a great deal of knowledge and experience in the sector, which it is keen to pass on.

"When things go wrong, people tend to blame the cheapest component, which is usually the fastener," explains Staytite Managing Director Andrew Black. "Of course it's often not the fastener that is to blame.

"We are able to offer solutions to the end user, who are experts in their area but usually not so knowledgeable about fasteners – we can help."

Based in High Wycombe in the Chilterns, the family business is staffed by 70 and owned by Andrew Black: "We own the building and we're financially strong.

"In the past we have been seen as a bit of a one trick pony," Black tells Torque. "People haven't always realised the depth of range that we stock – it's actually a lot broader than many think."

That range includes brands like Barb Nuts, Carp Nuts, Hardlock Nuts and – of course – Staytite Nuts. Along with product lines such as Flanged Screws, Flanged Nuts, SEMS Screws, among others.

Aside from standard products, Staytite can source and supply bespoke threaded metal products for specific needs. "One of our key advantages is that we have a lot of technical knowledge. We can solve fastener product challenges using our experience and we have long standing relationships with manufacturers.

"One of the benefits of having a varied customer base is that we can draw on their experience. We're learning all the time."

This key offering from Staytite is complemented by the firm's online fastener builder tool, which doubles as

an online shop front for its services.

"The fastener builder is a great thing to have on our site," Black explains. "Not only does it show customers what we can do, but it also helps them focus on exactly what they require and lets them see the possibilities of what we can produce for them."

The online portal allows customers to select the drive, the head, the washers and the thread of the fastener, at which point the Staytite team bring in their vast experience to help the customer produce a fastener fit for their purposes.

Currently, much of Staytite's business is done within the UK, however the company sees the opportunity to do more in Europe.

Torque couldn't resist putting the inevitable 'Brexit' question to the Staytite boss: "The post-vote currency changes are of course a question facing the industry, but if leaving the EU means a cut in bureaucracy then it could be a real benefit for manufacturers.

"The weak pound has certainly helped exports, but it has of course pushed up costs for the majority of fasteners coming into the UK – this is going to have ramifications.

"Possibly there will be a market shakeout, but the good companies will survive and flourish."

Staytite also has a distribution facility based in Hong Kong – where stock is in US Dollars – providing the company and its customers with further stability. "We hold large stocks and we can shield customers from price fluctuations."

Staytite has been in the business long enough to see a change in expectations from customers. "Next day delivery is something customers want to see. You need a high level of stock for that and we

are fleet of foot and able to react quickly.

"Our customers don't like to carry a lot of stock, including the distributors – they don't want to commit to it and that's a marked difference to the situation one or two years ago. That is risk mitigation and it is understandable."

Batch traceability has become more important to the market – "it reassures our customers."

Staytite also offers customers the choice to receive product in unbranded packaging and bags of specific quantity fasteners, or to add on customer labels in the Staytite warehouse.

This year Staytite will be appearing at Torque-Expo in Silverstone. How important is it for companies to get out to shows in general and meet customers face-to-face? "It is important, but it's also essential to quantify the return for the exhibition. If you go away with a couple of leads then that is great but you need to follow them up properly – you have to go to the show with a purpose.

"The fastener industry has not traditionally been particularly well marketed. People don't always pick up on all the changes in technology in fasteners – they just see the appearance has hardly changed and don't understand that there have been technical advances."

Looking ahead, Staytite's thirst for providing fastener solutions for its customers and offering them good service is undiminished.

"At Staytite we have good internal systems, we are efficient, we are committed to the quality of the product and to solve problems. There's plenty of technical knowhow in the company, so if you have issues or questions, get in contact."

www.staytite.com