Apple International

US revenues drive growth at specialist food systems manufacturing business

Hull-based manufacturer of food production technology, Apple International, has grown revenue by 29%, from £1.4m to £1.8m in the 12 months to 31 July 2015, after a record year of US exports.

Apple International manufactures and maintains specialist super-efficient food depositing and injecting equipment that is used all around the world. Its technology is installed in many UK bakeries and food manufacturing production lines to make donuts, cakes, and prepared foods and desserts.

The firm’s wholly-owned US subsidiary, Apple Food Systems Inc. contributed over £500,000 in turnover during the period, largely driven by sales of the firm’s high-tech RBB300 Rapid Depositor, which is used on some of the fastest and largest ready-meal production lines in the US.

The super-efficient units can very accurately deliver precision portions of food into ready-meal trays at very high speeds, reducing the waste and over portioning generated by other technologies by more than 85 per cent.

“The success of the Rapid Depositor in the USA is something we are looking to build on this year,” said Apple International managing director Steve Smith.

“We have a unique opportunity to bring massive savings in waste to the operators of these vast ready-meal production lines in the USA, and we can prove ROI in less than nine months, which gives us a compelling sales pitch in an industry with very small margins,” he added.

“We have identified a number of large US-based food manufacturers that are constantly looking to improve operational efficiencies and streamline their production, and we are targeting these firms for further growth in the US market this year,” added Mr Smith.
The rise in sales and production has seen an additional 30% expansion within the firm’s existing 4,750 sq ft head office manufacturing assembly and testing facility in Hull, which employs 10 people.

As well as the RBB300 Rapid Depositor, the company is increasing sales of its smaller and less specialised production units, designed to pipe foodstuffs such as cream, jam and sauces into baked goods.

These units are often used by smaller food manufacturers that don’t run the vast high-speed lines that only a small number of food manufacturing giants operate. The technology and precision design principles are similar, however, and the firm has a niche in accuracy of portion delivery, as well as a reputation for quality & reliability, with some units in service on the same production lines for two to three decades.

“We’re very proud to be manufacturing British technology that is used globally, and we’re investing in training more staff to enable the innovation to continue as our products evolve,” concluded Mr Smith.