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PRESS RELEASE

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Hozelock MD, Peter Rush: "We need to invest continuously"



One of the five new injection moulding machines at Hozelock's world-class production facility at Midpoint Park, Birmingham



Hozelock's award-winning 33,400 sq m manufacturing and distribution centre is set for years of continual investment

HOZELOCK INVEST £1M IN STATE-OF-THE-ART INJECTION MOULDING PLANT

Progressive Midlands firm shortlisted for seven Manufacturing Excellence Awards

Shortlisted for no fewer than seven 2008 MX Awards by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, Hozelock – the UK's leading manufacturer of garden watering, spraying and pond equipment – has announced a £1m investment in new state-of-the-art injection moulding machinery, tooling and engineering resources. The investment will enhance its Birmingham plant's position as a world class plastic component manufacturing facility while giving the company the capacity to meet increases in sales this year.

New 210, 125 and 80 tonne Demag Systec moulding machines and a pair of Arburg 35 tonne machines bring the total number on the Midpoint Park site in Minworth to 50, giving Hozelock not only the required boost to outputs but also setting new low energy consumption standards for the site.

Component-specific tooling for new pressure sprayers, watering tools and aquatics products has also been commissioned, together with a similar sized investment in replacement production tooling in line with Hozelock's policy of continuous improvement both to products and to manufacturing efficiency.

And following last year's integration into Midpoint Park of two sister sites formerly at Aylesbury, the company has invested in an Engineering Centre of Excellence to bring together all aspects of design and engineering in one location.

According to Hozelock's managing director, Peter Rush, the company has embarked upon a continual programme of investment at the site which will see significant additions and improvements to the award-winning facility every year for years to come.

FURTHER INFORMATION: Simon Chapman at Prototype – tel **0118 940 3785** or e-mail sc@pr100.com

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"Competition has never been stiffer," said Mr Rush, "and in order to keep our lead we need to invest continuously in new technology while improving the efficiency of our manufacturing techniques and the quality and competitiveness of our finished products."

The company also prides itself on its manufacturing flexibility and rapid reaction times, both of which are essential when servicing such a seasonal and sometimes unpredictable market. "Our ability to ramp up production of seasonally fast-moving products such as hose systems at a moment's notice gives us a huge advantage over distant producers," said Mr Rush.

Manufacturing Excellence

The recently extended 33,400 sq m Midpoint Park facility was given a Manufacturing Excellence Award last year by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers in recognition of the seamless integration of two satellite plants into the Minworth site. It also reflected the company's achievement in managing change in the face of threats from the environment, in the form of hosepipe bans, and from cheap imports from the Far East.

Building upon that achievement, Hozelock has been shortlisted in seven of the thirteen 2008 MX Award categories. Along with nineteen other contenders for the IMechE 'Oscars' of the business world, including Rolls Royce, Dunlop Aerospace, Leyland Trucks and Perkins, Hozelock will contest the **InnovationXchange Award for Process Innovation; PricewaterhouseCoopers Award for Customer Focus; DMG Award for Business Development and Change Management; IMechE Award for Best Financial Management; Autodesk Award for Product Innovation; Arup Award for Sustainable Manufacturing; and the National B2B Centre Award for Integrated e-Business.**

Lord Kumar Bhattacharyya, patron of the MX Awards, said: "The global competitiveness of UK manufacturing companies is vital to the economic success of our country so I am delighted to support MX which celebrates the best in industry. The twenty shortlisted firms are the best in UK business."

With assessors claiming that the standard of entries in the annual awards' 26-year history is the highest yet, Hozelock's achievement is remarkable, however well they fare in the final adjudications on June 26th.

"To gain such recognition alongside some of Britain's biggest, most innovative and most enterprising manufacturers bears testament to our own progress, to the quality and commitment of our team and to our resourcefulness in the face of diverse challenges," said Peter Rush.

For more information see the new Hozelock website at www.hozelock.com.

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