

Rising Star Brings Its Rich History and Bright Vision to the Paint & Hardware Market

E Butterworth & Co. Inc. (EBCO), which has a remarkable 173-history as a leading recycler of textile products, is combining a long-term heritage with a bright new vision to become a rising star in the paint and hardware distribution channel.

The company got its start in 1839, long before the word “green” would come to mean “eco-friendly” or “environmentally responsible.” However, the company’s recycling operations are more relevant today than ever before, now that we are living in an era in which environmental stewardship is part of every manufacturer’s lexicon.

“As we like to say ‘We were green, well before green was cool,’ ” reported Jeff Pearl, Vice President of Sales and Operations. “In fact, we are one of the oldest companies in the world handling textile by-products in the form of textile waste to be recycled. Our company is even listed as one of the oldest companies in the world on *Wikipedia.org*.”

On an annual basis, EBCO recycles more than 25 million pounds of textiles from manufacturing facilities located in the United States. Much of this recycled material is converted into cloth rags for use in the paint industry.

“From cloth to reinforced industrial wipers, we have it all,” said Ryan Travis, national sales manager. “We have wip-

ers ranging in absorbency, color, size, texture and amount of lint to fit any painter’s needs. All of the wiping cloths we manufacture are either scrap waste from clothing manufacturers or from recycled used clothing. Both types of textile waste are diverted from landfills and given new life as wiping rags.”

There are few, if any, companies with a longer history than E. Butterworth & Co. Inc. serving the paint and hardware industries. Founded in England, the company established its U.S. presence in 1860 with an office in Massachusetts and has operated without interruption in the state ever since. Its current headquarters are located in Dracut, Mass.



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Until 1987, the company was part of an international group, Edwin Butterworth & Co. Ltd. That is the year when the current president Bob Travis purchased the company and put in a

bright young management team with a vision for ensuring EBCO’s success well into the future.

While the company’s lineage goes back to pre-Civil War days, EBCO operates as a modern manufacturer in the technological age using innovative techniques for ensuring top-notch product quality and cutting-edge ideas to create the most effective product presentation possible.

“Currently we distribute wiping cloths through industrial and janitorial suppliers and directly to hardware and paint stores throughout the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic,” Ryan Travis explained. “We’ve invested heavily in

technology over the past few years to help us put out more attractive products and gain operational efficiencies. To this end, we are looking to form strategic partnerships with paint and hardware distributors to distribute our domestically made product throughout the U.S. and Canada.”

EBCO’s U.S.-based operations are an important factor differentiating the company from others in the industry. “Most wiping rags you see used in the paint industry are imported from South and Central America, Pakistan, China and South Africa,” Travis said. “We are proud of the fact that our new knits are collected, processed and packaged in the U.S., which means

we support U.S. manufacturing and the American worker.”

The advantages of EBCO U.S.-produced goods are evident to anyone who uses the company’s products. “The quality is easy to distinguish, as our wiping rags will be much less ‘silky’ feeling and are guaranteed to always be absorbent,” Pearl stated.

Given that absorbency is key, EBCO does everything it can to improve this property, even putting many of its new knit wiping cloths through rigorous proprietary processes that took the company years to perfect. “One process simply opens the fibers to ensure better absorbency, which we use on our washed colored knits,” explained Pearl.

Another process opens the fibers while also eliminating any dye that could potentially bleed onto the wiping surface. “This is a process we use on our new washed tan knit and on our



EBCO has the lightest shade of tan in the industry.

new washed white knit,” Pearl added. “We fondly refer to our tan wiping cloth as ‘The SPONGE’ or ‘TRUtan,’ which is by far the lightest shade of tan available in the industry.”

EBCO’s mission statement is “to offer the most attractive and most complete line of wiping products while providing unprecedented sales support to all of its distributors.” The company ensures that the needs of a diverse cus-

tomers base is met with its various packaging options, ranging from 1-pound bags to 4- and 5-pound compressed “packs” or boxes to 10-, 25- and 50-pound compressed and regular boxes or compressed packs.

To help propel sales, EBCO is focusing on creating attractive packaging and product displays. For the paint and hardware market, the company is working on a new design for a freestanding display that is sure to be an attention-grabber in any retail store.

“We also can private-label all products with our distributor’s name, logo and contact information,” said Pearl. “As a distributor, having your name on the package of rags will help your repeat sales and word-of-mouth business.”

For more details about the company, visit online at www.TheAbsorbentCompany.com or www.ebutterworth.com. ■

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