

# NEWS STRAND

INDUSTRY NEWS FROM STRAND HARDWARE & STRAND TECHNOLOGIES



ISSUE 01 // SEPTEMBER 2023



# STRAND OF THOUGHT

## Welcome to News Strand

– the first ever newsletter for Strand Hardware and Strand Technologies. We have created this publication to keep in touch with you, our clients, to keep you up to speed with what's going on and what we have planned.



On a personal note it's now been almost two years since I took on the role of Managing Director for of these two great companies – one well established, the other just two years old and at the cutting edge of the technical and digital side of our industry. Together, these two 'sisters' complement each other and have extended the Strand 'offer' to meet a wider range of customer needs.

Being at the helm is not a responsibility that I take lightly, especially as guardian of the Franks family legacy, which founded Strand Hardware more than 30 years ago. However, I am supported in my efforts by a great team of colleagues – technical and operational experts who make the day-to-day running of our companies run like clockwork, and an experienced executive team and board with whom I share a joint vision and purpose.

We continue to make improvements to strengthen our two companies while maintaining top quality products, customer service and providing expertise to our clients.

Best Wishes,

Steve Marshall, MD

## Strand Hardware Makes its Mark



Strand Hardware made its mark and completed UKCA compliancy a year ahead of schedule.

Certifications for all Panic Hardware ranges – 290 products in total – were in place for the original January 2023 deadline but because so many companies were not ready the Government extended the completion date to June 2025

However, all of Strand's panic hardware products now bear the UKCA mark under the new 'harmonised/designated standard'. The required Declaration of Performance (DOPs) and fitting instructions are available on our website for download.

[READ MORE](#)



## Promotions for Jo & Andy

Two team members were promoted to senior roles earlier this year: **Jo Wallis**, previously General Manager, is now Operations Director, while **Andy Michel** former Warehouse Supervisor, is now Warehouse and Production Manager.

Jo joined Strand Hardware in July 2019 and has worked in the industry for more than 20 years. She began her career as a Supply Chain Co-ordinator for Allgood plc before joining GEZE UK as a Purchasing Assistant and later became its Purchasing and Internal Sales Office Manager. She is MCIPS qualified and a member of the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply.

Andy joined Strand Hardware in 2012. He has taken on more managerial responsibilities including production planning, co-ordination, administration, efficiency reviews and quality assurance of warehouse, manufacturing, fulfilment and dispatch.



# Hitting the Headlines

Strand Hardware's 'expert voice' is now regularly seen across the trade press underpinning our growing presence as a 'go to' company with years of valuable experience.

Recent features have included a two-page spread in Door Industry Journal around specifying the right hardware for emergency exit and panic doors – highlighting the difference between manual and electrical options for panic and emergency environments.

Another insight piece on how natural ventilation could be achieved on a budget with manual closers, was commissioned by ABC&D Magazine. Both features were published in July.



# Setting the Bar Higher

Customer service is what sets Strand Hardware apart from its competitors – for 32 years we've gone above and beyond - providing technical advice and expertise, with fast and efficient service.

But we never rest on our laurels: every year we measure our performance against rigorous targets to 'add value' to the client experience.

Last year, we achieved a **99.54%** on time, in full (OTIF) average for our orders - exceeding our **98% target**. We also had:

- **Minimal processing errors**  
below our 0.5% orders received target.
- **Minimal order packing errors**  
below our 0.5% orders received target.
- **A total of 'all concerns raised'**  
less than 2% against all orders received.

Strand's annual client survey also identified a 100% company recommendation rating and 100% rating of products, quality, and reliability – the same or better than competitors

The company also had no major non-conformance reports (NCR) raised by British Assessment Bureau during its annual audit,



Operations Director Jo Wallis said that customer service was Strand's differential.

*"Operating within a business-to-business environment, we talk to all sorts of prospective customers and clients: from architects and developers to architectural ironmongers and installers. Every person will have different levels of knowledge which may require varying levels of advice and support. Fortunately, we have an expert team with extensive experience across the business."*

*"Our customer service starts with that first contact, carefully listening to what a customer wants to achieve and asking the right questions to guide them to the best possible solutions. We work within a highly technical industry which makes this process all the more important and we always aim to undertake this in a polite and friendly way. Most of our customers have been with us for many years – some since Strand Hardware was founded more than 30 years ago. These close working relationships are built on trust – underpinned by great customer service."*



# Embracing the Elements: Strand Hardware Celebrates New Offices

Earlier this year, we welcomed guests to a rededication ceremony at Strand House following an ambitious makeover of our head office. With perfect timing, the event coincided with a visit from the 'Beast from the East' - a sudden snowfall which cloaked the West Midlands - but undeterred the majority of our guests arrived: from Germany and across the UK, including loyal customers, dedicated suppliers, and members of the media.

## Revolutionising the Workspace

The building underwent a radical revamp, during which the team 'kept calm and carried on' over the noise of building work, constant upheaval and endless settling of dust. The programme of works was completed over 31 weeks, resulting in a modern, open plan work space with hi-tech reception and improved energy efficiency.

Many of the materials used in the project were sourced from suppliers and clients including new windows, fire doors, electricals, plumbing, furniture, decoration, carpeting and signage, along with some Strand's own ironmongery products.



## Honouring a Legacy

More than 70 guests attended the March event including Reiner Wiese and Baabitha from our finger protection supplier, Athmer, who travelled from Arnsberg in Germany, and Simon Forrester, Chief Executive Officer of the Guild of Architectural Ironmongers.

Ironically, one of the 'no shows' was the Mayor of Walsall, who was due to preside over the ribbon-cutting ceremony. Instead, our very own VIP, Christine Franks, wife of company founder, the late Jonathan Franks, did the honours.



### This little twist of fate provided a heartwarming and fitting moment:

This little twist of fate provided a heartwarming and fitting moment:



*"I know that Jonathan would have been extremely proud to see how Strand Hardware has flourished,"* she said before cutting through the crimson ribbon.



Guests were treated to refreshments and goody bags and a special cake was created to mark the event.



### A Journey of Success and Growth

In his speech, Managing Director Steve Marshall, said: *"The completion of the refurbishment project took many months of planning, organisation, disruption and hard work from all concerned. Those who had visited us before will no doubt see a vast improvement in our working environment, and our environmental credentials."*

*"Since the dear late Mr Jonathan Franks set up the company in 1991, Strand Hardware has gone from strength-to-strength, navigating its way through many national and global challenges, while always sitting solidly on its impeccable financial foundations."*

He paid tribute to Strand's 'family' – its 21-strong workforce and Jonathan's daughter, Catherine Franks who took over as MD in 2005 and now Chairs the board.

*"She has positioned Strand as one of the market leaders in our industry with customer service levels that are second to none and a reputation of which we can be proud,"* he added.



# Warehouse Improvements Boost Efficiency

For many companies, the warehouse is the 'engine room' of its business operations and Strand is no exception, so we were delighted to undertake a project with a team from Warwick University which helped us develop leaner assembly, dispatch and warehousing processes – saving hundreds of staff hours each year.

WMG (Warwick Manufacturing Group) optimised our warehouse layout to improve movement for the efficient flow of picking, assembly and packing. It involved time and motion analysis through site visits, video capture and process flow assessment. Findings outlined cycle times and mapped the movement of people.

The resulting report outlined a series of recommendations to improve process capacity, including quick wins and minor modifications to warehouse and workstations layout to introduce time savings.

Kanban shelving was introduced into the assembly area to allow components to be picked more efficiently. The double-sided racks are then restocked by one of the team who conveys stock from the warehouse to the assembly stations.

Steve Marshall, Managing Director, said: ***"Having experts come into the business with fresh pairs of eyes, ask the right questions and with the knowledge to assess and analyse our operations was invaluable. In the long term, this will make our business leaner and more efficient – the ideal foundation for future growth."***

The project was undertaken with funding from the Digital Innovation for Manufacturing programme.

Warehouse and Production Manager Andy Michel said: ***"The results will make the job easier for many of the team and help Strand Hardware in its continuous improvement."***

Added Chris Wang, of WMG SME Group: ***"WMG and Strand Hardware worked collaboratively to analyse its current assembly area in readiness for optimising production. The recommendations should achieve a 50% reduction in cycle times per unit and a 5.105% capacity increase."***





## Strand Tech Extends Product Range

Strand Technologies is now a UK distributor for two leading international brands – Ditec and AES Global.

Italian-based Ditec is a worldwide market leader and manufacturer of swing and sliding gate operating equipment, and traffic barrier systems. AES Global, based in Northern Ireland, produces innovative security technology including wireless intercom for gates and entrances.

Both partnerships are ideally aligned to Strand Tech which was founded to spearhead our own technology solutions for the safety, security and control of electro-mechanical operating systems, including automatic doors and entrances.

Ditec products were the first to be introduced outside our own manufacture. They boast a stylish aesthetic with advanced technology for reliability and ease of use. Its entrance systems are energy efficient – enabling users to make energy savings while reducing environmental impact.

Strand is stocking products from its sliding and swing gate range. This includes: Cross, Ion and Neos model operators for sliding gates, and Cubic, PWR, Arc and Facil for swing gates. We are also stocking the Qik range for automatic traffic barriers and a range of accessories.

Ditec automatic barriers are perfect for shopping centres, hotels, residential blocks and public areas which need safe, efficient and reliable access control. They are ideal for sites with medium to high traffic volume.

The AES Global's DECT 603 wireless Intercom series was more recently introduced. It includes the IMP/HF-IMP, AB/ABK and AS/ASK. All products have a 400m (open field) to 200m (exterior concrete, brick or stone wall) working range and with keypad options available alongside tag and card. The AS/ASK version is made from 100% BS316 marine grade stainless steel – ideal for coastal areas - with a modern curved profile with wall back lighting effect.

Details of the product ranges can be found here:



**DITEC PRODUCTS**

**AES INTERCOMS**

## Neil Joins the Team

Neil Rollerson has joined the Strand team as Business Manager to support business growth and oversee key projects.



He has a wealth of expertise in the security, auto-door and engineering industries, having previously led the sales teams for industry leaders, such as Safetell and Meesons. Neil also founded and managed his own auto door and security companies.

*Said Neil: "It's an exciting time to join Strand as we look to expand across new and existing markets. I am joining a customer-focused team with extensive experience and look forward to working with them to ensure we continue to exceed our customers' expectations."*

## Waste Management

Leading Staffordshire-based recycling and waste equipment management company Byrkley Ltd, uses the iContact IoT system to monitor and manage its equipment remotely.

iContact ECO3 devices have been configured and interfaced for automatic email and SMS alerting providing remote power failure and "Bin Full" alerting 24/7. This state-of-the-art solution enables automated waste collection management thereby saving Byrkley's customers time and money.

Read Byrkley MD Sam Hudson's testimonial



# Take Three Strands

We recently launched 'Take Three Strands' on social media - a 'what's the difference?' look at a particular product range. It's had a great response, so we're shining the spotlight on one of our best sellers in this issue of News Strand:

## Finger Protection

We stock six product variances within this range. – here are three specified to meet very different requirements



**FP200** - the original and still best selling in standard lengths of 1925mm and 2015mm.

**FP300** - for glass doors, supplied with strong self-adhesive fixing tape to secure the device in place on glass doors and frames.

**FP800** - for external doors where frequent 'wet' deep cleaning is necessary. The profile is designed to minimise water ingress and the fabric is water resistant.

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

## Client Showcase: Show Off Your Projects!

Would you like to star in the next issue of News Strand or on social media?

We're encouraging you to share an outline of a project in which you have used Strand products. Let us know how they have provided a solution or finishing touch.

Please email us with an outline of the project, products used, why they worked well. Accompany the details with a quote, a couple of photos and we'll make you the star of the show!

Email your projects to:  
[craig.fox@strandhardware.co.uk](mailto:craig.fox@strandhardware.co.uk)



## Made in Britain

We are flying the flag by renewing our Made in Britain credentials.

To be eligible, a company must be a manufacturer of goods that use raw materials/components that have undergone a "substantial and transformative change" as a result of manufacturing processes in Great Britain or Northern Ireland. They must also be completely manufactured and assembled by a UK workforce.



The certification has been given for our popular Duoflex range of window openers which is made and assembled by Strand Hardware in the West Midlands.

## Cheers... see you there!

We will be attending the GAI Education Awards and look forward to meeting many of our clients and associates at The Brewery, London, on Thursday 23 November. Come and say hello!

We will also be sponsoring the pre dinner drinks reception at AI Spec Awards in April next year. Nominations are now open and close on 1 December for projects and products completed or released on the market between October 2021 and September 2023.

For award categories and further details:

**AWARD CATEGORIES AND  
FURTHER DETAILS**



Strand Hardware Limited  
Strand House  
Premier Business Park  
Long Street  
Walsall - WS2 9DY  
United Kingdom

**Phone.** (+44) 01922 639111  
**Email.** [info@strandhardware.co.uk](mailto:info@strandhardware.co.uk)  
**www.** [strandhardware.co.uk](http://strandhardware.co.uk)



Strand Technologies Ltd  
Strand House  
Premier Business Park  
Long Street  
Walsall - WS2 9DY  
United Kingdom

**Phone.** (+44) 01922 332334  
**Email.** [info@strandtech.co.uk](mailto:info@strandtech.co.uk)  
**www.** [strandtech.co.uk](http://strandtech.co.uk)