



CARDIFF
SWANSEA
TENBY

WG Davies
Servicing South Wales

Customer Newsletter

Q3 2023

Editor's message

Welcome to the Q3 Customer Newsletter, which has been a huge pleasure to pull together.

The customer spotlight interview with Dan Hunt at TASDS is a wonderfully honest and revealing conversation - his work ethic and family first values are truly humbling and we are really grateful to him for taking the time to talk to us.

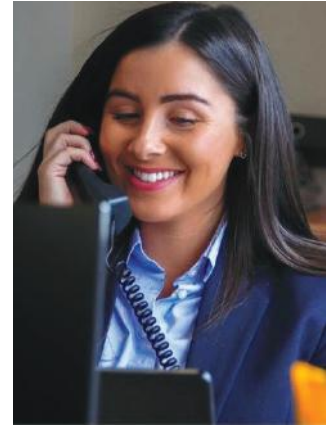
Roger uses his column to reveal our company values and hopes you already feel how these

guide our work practices every day. We also welcome Hayley Dyer back to WG Davies in a role that impacts both staff and customers in some crucial ways. Alongside all of that there are updates from the depots and parts, plus Dave Hopkins in Sales who has never been busier, as well as social media and CSI features too.

I hope you enjoy the read.

Rachel.

Rachel



The Inside Track: Living Our Values, Roger Davies

We believe in bringing our values to life by what we do every day.

It defies what most business gurus would preach but we have never shouted about our values, preferring to create a culture which empowers our people to work to key principles which guide the way we do business each and every day.

In short, these principles ensure the customer is always looked after as if they were a member of the WG Davies family, while also nurturing our people, so that talent is identified and developed for our future.

If we had to state them, the core values which sum up what we stand for are in fact common to many organisations, because the act of choosing words is relatively easy and it is no surprise that they can sound repetitive. What I want to impress upon everyone who comes into contact with WG Davies - as a supplier, a customer or a member of our staff - is that we are trying to walk the walk, rather than just talk the talk.

As a proud network member of MAN Truck & Bus we embrace their core values of customer focus, integrity, respect, team spirit and determination, and here is how we bring those to life at WG Davies.



• **Customer Focus:** we genuinely care about our customers' needs, we recognise those needs are unique to them and we are aware of our role in our customers' success. We are committed to developing customer relationships that are true partnerships and we empower our staff to do whatever is necessary to keep our customers' wheels turning

• **Integrity:** we do the right things in the right way, crucially this means we keep our promises and ensure all legal and compliance standards are met

• **Respect:** for us this means having respect for each other, our customers and of course all the people we work with at MAN Truck & Bus

Team Spirit: we want people to enjoy coming to work for WG Davies. The investments made over the past years have helped create a work environment within which we can truly work together, have each others' backs and be the very best we can be at work

• **Determination:** we will go above and beyond expectations and refuse to compromise, always look for solutions and be motivated to reach the next level

These are the guiding principles which provide a common purpose and shape the way we work to look after our customers and each other. We may not shout about them but we hope you are aware of them in all that we do.

Roger Davies



Customer Spotlight: Dan Hunt, TASDS



Dan (right) with his father and mentor, John

16 years ago Dan Hunt set out to create a business in a highly competitive sector, with the belief that success would come from offering better customer service than the multitude of businesses which already operate in this space. Janet caught up with Dan, founder of Tail lift & Shutter Door Specialists (TASDS), to understand how that worked out. TASDS offers service and repair of tail lifts, shutter doors, fork lift trucks, passenger lifts, cranes and winches across the UK from their base in Caerphilly 365 days a year.

Dan started his working life as a forklift truck apprentice and progressed to become the youngest field service engineer in Wales. He worked for the main players in the forklift truck industry before being headhunted to work on tail lifts. He quickly found himself managing a team of 14 engineers, working 18 to 20 hours a day but, he told us "I could see that in common with the other companies I'd worked for, they just did not care about the customer and the culture was negative."

The timing was not great but Dan decided to start his own business, "My wife at the time was eight months pregnant with twins. I said to her "I've had enough, I know I can do the job better and because I care, I believe I'll be able to build my own business." To her credit, she was surprised but supportive."

Starting a business was something Dan had wanted to do for a long time and he had discussed it with his father. "I used to ask him if he thought I was ready to go into business on my own and he would say "No Son". Time would pass and I'd ask him again "Dad, do you think I'm ready to go into business for myself?" and he'd say "No Son." This time I just got on with it; I registered the business and I told my Dad, "I'm doing it, I'm setting up on my own" and he said to me "You're ready, Son. I know you are ready because you haven't had to ask me."

Dan's vision was of a business built on a commitment to providing great customer care and that paid off almost instantly - he made a profit in the first year and doubled that in the second year, all without borrowing a penny. "I had some savings and the way I live my life is, if I haven't got it, I won't have it."

What he did have, in abundance, was the continued support of his father, "My dad, John

Hunt, has been my mentor since day one. He has always believed in me and his guidance, knowledge and support have been the most important factors in my success, I will always be grateful for that."

Dan and TASDS quickly earned themselves the enviable reputation of doing exactly what they promised, "I had one customer who would tell me we were the Ronseal of the tail lift industry, we do exactly what it says on the tin. It's true, I won't promise something I can't deliver."

Of course there have been some bumps in the road, some real challenges which led Dan to tell me "I always say if I had my time to do it again, I wouldn't! That said I'm really glad I have. I sacrificed time with my children for the business but I've worked my way through that and now I'm trying to be a father, a businessman and a mechanic, I'm wearing three hats every day." It is Dan's children who are his guiding light. Much like his father has been (and still is) to him, he wants to be a positive role model for them. "I've got a very close relationship with all my children, they're the ones that drive me. They tell me they're proud of me and it chokes me up every time."

There is a wonderful honesty about Dan, he has an exceptionally strong work ethic and sees life as full of opportunity. "Everyone wants everything, but there's only one percent of people who are prepared to do it like Dan (right) with his father and mentor, John actually do anything about it. I believe that if you want something you have to go and get it, you've got to put yourself out there."

It has not been easy, Dan has had staff steal from him and lie to him but the toughest times have been when his family has struggled. He shared his grief at losing his two grandmothers, one of whom raised him, and when his father had a heart attack at 53, he said, "It knocked me sideways. But the biggest test was going through a divorce while trying to run the business and still be super-dad." Even the better times have been hard, "There have been a lot of soaking wet, cold horrible nights, where I have been covered in grease and oil - it's been hard work and while I never expected it to be easy, I never expected it to be that hard either!"

He is also quick to acknowledge that he has a great team around him now, "I know my staff work very hard and they put up with a lot. In particular, I have the utmost respect for my Operations Manager, Nicola Thicket and my Service Manager,

Paul Williams, both of whom have been with me for over 10 years now. Without them, not just in work but outside of work as well, I wouldn't be where I am now. They are totally honest with me but also 100% supportive and I am very grateful for that."

TASDS boast a fleet of six MAN TGE vans, bought on the glowing recommendation of a friend he trusted; "One of my best friends works for a competitor of mine. He was a big fan of the Sprinters but when he got a MAN TGE he said there was no way he would drive anything else." Dan bought two TGEs immediately, found they were everything his friend promised and put in an order for another four. "The boys love driving them, they look good, they carry what we need them to carry, as well as being reliable and professional. It's not the cheapest van out there." Dan acknowledges, "but it's about quality and service, and the service from WG Davies has been absolutely incredible. I've never known anything like it."

In fact there is a great match of values between TASDA and WG Davies. As Dan puts it. "Every other company that I've ever dealt with, they say "I'll ring you when it's ready." Which actually means we need to keep chasing them and they never ever ring us. WG Davies is completely different, they are on the ball. They mirror what I try and do for my customers. I honestly cannot recommend them highly enough. It's been a breath of fresh air dealing with them, I didn't think companies like that existed."

Outside of work, Dan loves the time he has with his twins, they are with him three and a half days a week and he is a hands-on dad. "My ex and I both do the school run, which I absolutely love because I get time to talk to them. It brings me back down to earth after work. I make the tea and I make their lunches - I really enjoy all of that." He is clear that his family comes first, "I would honestly, hand on heart, walk away from the company if it affected my children. Nothing comes above them and nothing ever will. They are my world."

We can only hope he continues to enjoy the success he has worked for with TASDS as well as the quality time with his family in Caerphilly. He has worked incredibly hard to get where he is and his work ethic, his honesty and his love for his family are humbling. Thank you Dan.



Depot Round Up - Q3

Cardiff, Tom Carroll

It is no secret that Cardiff has been particularly busy lately and, like so many working in the transport industry, we are in need of additional resource that is proving so difficult to find.



There is an ongoing concerted effort to recruit more technicians and in parallel with that we have had a reorganisation of the service administration function, to enable us to prepare for Xpower and keep customer communication a top priority.

To that end Tom Carroll is now focused on ensuring we know exactly what work is required for each vehicle that is planned into the workshop. That includes a check on the defects we might need to rectify as well as understanding what servicing is required. He then communicates with parts to make sure we have what we need in advance, while also managing expectations with customers in respect of the time we will need the vehicle to complete the work.

Customers will be aware that Lisa Mason and Tricia Mackenzie are front of house and greeting anyone who visits our service department. We look forward to hearing via customer feedback that the changes have had a positive impact.



Tenby, Sarah Spolton

The small but perfectly formed team in Tenby have continued to work harder than I can ever remember and this has meant we have hit all our targets each month - all credit to them for pulling together during another busy quarter.

There is no sign that the work load will drop off any time soon as we have welcomed a new customer to Tenby; QinetiQ will be bringing three tractor units and four trailers to us on a regular basis.

The workload now demands a dedicated parts man who will be based in Tenby to ensure we have what we need to turn vehicles around more quickly. We are in the process of recruiting now and I will look forward to sharing more news on that before the end of the year.

Swansea, Dan Jones

We are all hoping for the opportunity to catch our breath in Swansea after another busy quarter. The commitment from the team has been and remains outstanding - everyone has pulled together to get the work done, while covering for holidays, with the single focus of keeping our customers on the road.

As well as the scheduled service and maintenance we do, we have recently prepared 16 new vehicles for Wincanton and for MAN key accounts, with a further 10 for M&S which are due to be delivered at the beginning of October.



Josh Eynon in high spirits as usual

Alongside all of that, we are preparing for the installation of the new dealer management system on 1st Nov. The move to Xpower promises improved efficiencies across everything we do and we are excited to be taking our work to the next level.

We enjoy chasing improvement in everything we do, that has led to us being recognised by MAN Truck & Bus as Dealer of the Year in 2021 and I am beyond proud to share that we have been



Steve Gates celebrates another PDI done

shortlisted as one of the top five service dealers for 2022. Whatever the final result I want to thank the team for their hard work and professionalism over the last quarter.



Swansea MOT and Light Servicing, Michelle Kidwell

Summer is always a whirlwind of motor home preparation on top of the work we do and love for the customers we see on a regular basis.

Our side of the business has some seasonal fluctuations for sure but is generally stable; the services we offer are unchanged and the work rolls through nicely, thanks to our loyal customers, both private and commercial, many of whom we have been dealing with for a number of years now.

It is great to be able to report that the MOT technicians have all passed their recent exams, following ongoing MOT training and we are looking forward to quarter 4, which will signal a rest for our air-conditioning servicing and re-gassing equipment!



Chris Loyns our main MOT Technician

Welcome Back Hayley Dyer

Hayley has come back to WG Davies to take on the role of People and Quality Advisor

Those who work from our Swansea depot will be aware that Hayley Dyer is back after an absence of two years. Originally Hayley was a Purchase Ledger Clerk before leaving to work in education. She told us, "My role was as a Teaching Assistant in a Pupil Referral Unit and it was both rewarding and very challenging at times. I enjoyed it but I did miss working for WG Davies and the team, so I was excited to hear that a new job opportunity as People and Quality Advisor had arisen."

The role encompasses broad responsibilities for HR, including working with the BrightHR team, supporting WG Davies managers with recruitment, apprentice wellbeing and reviews, as well as identifying and delivering training needs, which will embrace all technical training.

In addition, she will review health and safety, also quality; managing audits and reviews to ensure we surpass the criteria required to keep the Quality Management System, QMS 90001 kite mark, which gives our customers another reason to have confidence in everything we do for them.

We asked Hayley to tell us something about herself that people might not know, "This is a bit of an odd one," she revealed, "but I have a photographic memory for people's birthdays!" and that did take us by surprise.

Hayley lives in Gellinudd in Pontardawe with Andrew and their two children; Oliver, who is 11 and has just started comprehensive school and Grace who is 7 and loves dance



and gymnastics. When she is not at work or spending time with the family, Hayley told us "I like to switch off by going to a dance class with my friends, shopping, going out to restaurants and having a glass of wine or two."

We will look forward to hearing more from Hayley as she settles into the new job.

Customer Service Interviews

Feedback from our customers on the service we give and specifically our ability to accommodate your vehicles when you need us.

The insights we get from our Customer Service Interviews are nothing short of gold to us because although we want to know when we get it right, we really want to know when we get it wrong or if there is something we could do a little better.

To all of our customers who give up their time to talk to Janet Birkmyre, a huge thank you. In a world that is increasingly embracing chat bots and AI, we are holding firm to good old fashioned, human to human conversation.

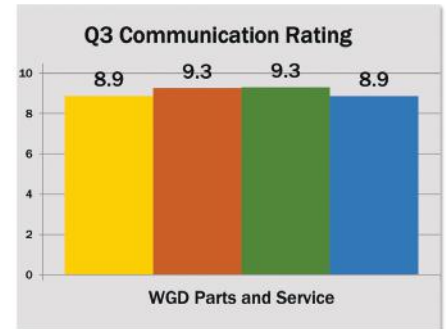
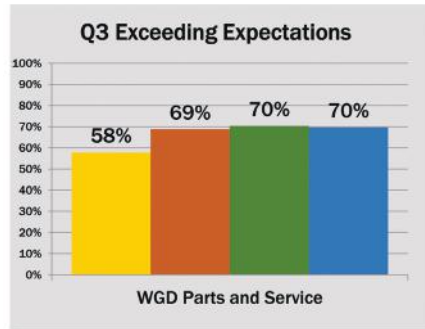
When we get it right customers are quick to acknowledge we go the extra mile - in Q3 70% told us we exceeded expectations, with most of the

remaining 30% telling us we met expectations. (See chart below).

On the other hand, we know that if there is one aspect of customer service that will always benefit from a little more attention, it is

communication and in that respect we heard from four customers who told us we could do better. (See below)

Thank you for the feedback, it keeps us focussed.



Sales Scoop, David Hopkins

We thought Q2 was busy but it turns out it was just a warm up for the PDIs required in Q3

It is hard to know if we are in catch up mode with new vehicle deliveries or if this is our new normal, either way the number of PDIs and deliveries seems to be building month on month.

There are more than 10 vehicles going through their exhaustive pre-delivery checks right now, including four tractor units for **Interhaul** and two for **Ammanford Recycling**, as well as a number of vehicles for **Castell Howell** which are part of a large order.

Alongside those we are preparing a new vehicle for **Crynant Plant**, who are moving back to the brand after a number of years. There are also used vehicles going out to **SJ Griffiths** a long-standing MAN user and **Creigiau Tyres** who will be taking their first MAN.

Here is a selection of the vehicles which went on the road in the last quarter for **Forward Waste Management**, **Castell Howell**, **Ammanford Recycling** and **V&K Group**.



Parts Update, Alun Taylor



It is great to be able to report that parts availability has improved, despite some ongoing issues. The interviews conducted as part of the CSI programme suggest most of our customers can feel that change for the better and even where there are delays, many acknowledge the issue is not with WG Davies. That said we are the face of MAN and we need to do everything we can to ensure the right parts are available to our service departments and retail customers, so we will continue to work on our first time pick rates and stock holding.

What we can own is the customer service around parts supply and, on that note, it is good to welcome some new

Parts availability is improving but we know we need to do even better

parts team members. Nicholas Hughes is our new Business Development Manager, while James Rogers joins us as a Parts Advisor in Cardiff. Harvey Beynon has started as a Parts Apprentice in Swansea and you will see Daniel Morgan on the road, as he fulfils the role of Parts Driver based out of Swansea.

We hold over 4,500 parts with a value of £460,000 but we know that we need to work closely with MAN Truck & Bus to improve availability and lead times to our customers - that will be my focus for Q4 and

beyond.