

# CUTTING EDGE

THE No.1 TRADE MAGAZINE FOR TODAY'S SHOE REPAIRER

SUMMER 2018



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# Summer time and the livin' is easy...

Well, it might have been for George Gershwin back in the 1930s but we all know how tough times are at the moment don't we?

However, it could still be a great few months... Who knows?

By the time you read this England's young football team could be about to make history in the World Cup Final by bringing back the glory days of 1966, while Andy Murray waits to play for his third Wimbledon Championship title. However, even though I might regret it I'm not going to be giving William Hill my precious fivers on the chances of either happening!

One thing that is a sure bet is that Cutting Edge is yet again bringing you lots of information about products to brighten your offer to your customers and boost your business profits, as well as entertaining articles featuring some of the best known names in the trade. And the best thing is it doesn't cost you a penny!

All you have to do is give us your name and address and we do the rest – and by the way in these days of GDPR you can be absolutely sure that once your details are on our mailing list they are completely safe and we promise not to divulge them to anyone else and we only use them to send your free magazine to you. However, if you decide you really don't want us to have your address please contact us and you will be deleted from the list and we won't send you

anything... including Cutting Edge magazine!! I hope you don't want that to happen but I do hope that you will want to get in touch to tell us YOUR interesting and entertaining stories from the trade.

The quickest way to contact us is by using the 'contact' page on our website, [www.cuttingedgemag.co.uk](http://www.cuttingedgemag.co.uk) - but I'm sure you already knew that didn't you? You have visited the site with the latest bits of news and the links to the websites of your favourite suppliers featured there, haven't you?

Well, I think that's all for now folks, see you in the Autumn...

*Tommy*

PS. You will probably notice that there is no Company Profile feature this time.

We contacted three leading suppliers to the trade hoping to give them some FREE publicity with a double page article in this issue.

None of them apparently wanted to take the opportunity.

**If you and your company have an interesting story to tell our readers please get in touch for next time!**

Inside this issue...

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT	p4
CE MAG NOW ONLINE	p5
SPOTLIGHT on Robin Healy	p14
SOCIETY NEWS from SOMSR	p18 & p19
CE / SOMSR GOLF DAY	p24 & p25
CUTTING REMARKS from the SoleTrader	p30
THIS IS MY LIFE Keith Malyon	p32
WEB DIRECTORY	p34
CLASSIFIED ADS	p35

Plus all the product & company news you need to know !!

## CUTTINGEDGE

incorporating The Shoe Repairer.  
4500 copies distributed FREE throughout the Shoe Repair trade to a regularly updated 'subscribers' list.

Editorial in this magazine does not represent the views and policy of The Cutting Edge Organisation, nor can the editor, production company or Cutting Edge accept any responsibility for advice given or product claims made throughout the magazine.

### EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Tony Driver, Editor, 5D Publicity Ltd., Peter Coulson, Siserve Ltd., Gary Unwin, Davenport-Burgess Ltd., Robin Healy, Tim Wilford, Glenway Products Ltd.

EDITORIAL & ADVERTISING FOR CUTTING EDGE MAGAZINE  
CALL 0113 225 1546 / email [info@5dpublicity.com](mailto:info@5dpublicity.com)

### SOMSR MATTERS

CALL 0113 200 3948 / email [info@somsr.com](mailto:info@somsr.com)

or write to SOMSR, 4 Brown Lane West, Leeds LS12 6BH

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## CUTTING EDGE CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

Though trade continues to be difficult, it was great to see a record attendance at the Cutting Edge/SOMSR golf day. Participants came from all parts of the trade, suppliers, Timpsons and independent shoe repairers (the majority) giving the event a really strong "trade" feel.

With several golfers, like myself, only able to dream of a handicap, the emphasis as always was on fun rather than golfing ability. Many thanks to all who supported the event.

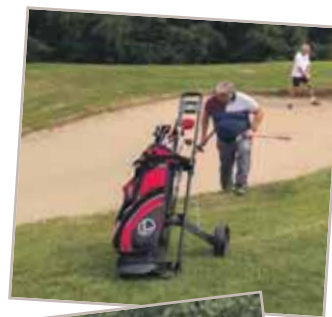
I am delighted that Robin Healy, recently retired from his family business Edward Healy and Sons, has agreed to take over as

secretary of SOMSR. The organisation has been a little rudderless for the last twelve months and it is wonderful that Robin has agreed to step in. SOMSR once again is in good hands and it is great that for only £10.00 per month that all independent shoe repairers can be a member of their trade organisation.

With the balmy summer sunshine replacing the Beast from the East, I am sure that I am not alone in getting in the mood for the summer holidays.

All the best to everyone in the trade for a well-earned break over the next few weeks.

Chris Wilson



# CUTTING EDGE MAGAZINE IS NOW ONLINE

Find the best bits from the no. 1 trade magazine for today's shoe repairer at [www.cuttingedgemag.co.uk](http://www.cuttingedgemag.co.uk)

Find links to your favourite suppliers' sites by clicking on their ads...

Watch out for the news and offers that you might not see in your latest copy of Cutting Edge magazine...

Look back at the last issue...

And get in touch with us quickly and easily...



## GDPR... DON'T MISS OUT on special offers & daily deals!!

GDPR...everybody was talking about it throughout May of this year. It suddenly dawned on businesses around the UK that by 25th May 2018 everyone would need to be compliant.

So did anyone actually know what GDPR stood for? Well, for those who don't know it stands for General Data Protection Regulation. Basically it means that any company that holds customer details must have them stored in safe places. So any computer systems must have adequate protection and any paperwork with personal information must be securely stored.

One of the many steps that we at Glenway had taken was to contact every customer on our database and ask their permission to use their email address in future. A blanket email was sent to all our customers

explaining our GDPR policy and included an opt in button.

If a customer on the database was currently active at the time it would have been deemed that they would be needed to be contacted via email in order to receive invoices etc. However, if the account was not active and the opt in button wasn't clicked emails will no longer be sent.

If you were unaware, or do not recall seeing the email, and would like to be "reinstated" to the mailing list send an email to [tim.wilford@glenway.co.uk](mailto:tim.wilford@glenway.co.uk), and we'll get it sorted.

For those of you who are definitely still on our list remember to look in your in box for "bargains from the batcave", "Glenn's daily deals", "flash sales" and many more from Glenway...

Tim Wilford, Sales Director, Glenway Products

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## A 'NEW' MAN JOINS CHARLES BIRCH

Charles Birch announce the appointment of Mike Revill as Sales Manager for the North East of England.

Mike is well known to most of the shoe repair and shoe retail trade in the north of England following many years with Dunkelman and Son Ltd selling Dasco, Bama and Kiwi. He will be taking over part of the area vacated by the retirement of Phill Binns and working alongside fellow newcomer to Charles Birch Simon Reed.

"We are delighted to welcome Mike to the Birch team" said Charles Birch MD Chris Wilson "he has been a supply partner to our company for over twenty years and there is no doubt his wealth of experience will be a huge benefit to our company and to our customers".



## BOB HEADS INTO THE SUNSET

We recently bid a fond farewell to our engineer Bob Taylor. He mysteriously finds the idea of drinking wine on the veranda of his newly built house on the exquisite Greek island of Kefalonia a better proposition than toiling away in our factory.....

Bob joined us 5 years ago, to see out the twilight of his working life in the go-getting field of shoe repair machine manufacture. He added a level of quality work, adaptability and dry humour we had despaired of ever finding in a single person! He'll be missed by us all at Standard.

All the best for the future Bob, and we're all eagerly awaiting our



Bob with Standard's MD, Keith Malyon

invites to drop-in and share in the good life with you and your missus when we just happen to be "passing by!"

**Gary Lewis**  
Standard Engineering Ltd

## SIMPLY KEYS - 28TH & 29TH JULY



Hickleys are holding their annual customer weekend called Simply Keys on the 28th & 29th July in Wolverhampton.

If you are an Auto Locksmith, offer vehicle key cloning or are interested in entering this market, this is the place to be to see the latest in vehicle key solutions. Simply Keys is not a conventional trade show, it is packed with vehicle demonstrations, product demonstrations, technical discussion and presentations.

We are supported by the leading key programming specialists Advanced Diagnostics & IEA (Zedfull) as well as many of the UK's leading auto locksmith and domestic suppliers.

This year will be even more important as this will be the best place to see, touch and USE the new Smart Pro key programmer from Advanced Diagnostics. If you're considering entering the key programming world or want to trade up your existing MVPPro or AD100Pro Simply keys will be the place to get your deal.

There will be lots to see with an exciting range of new vehicle demonstrations, every year we select a dozen or more new or popular vehicles that we can demonstrate the key programming procedures, staff from Hickleys, Advanced Diagnostics and Zedfull will be on hand to discuss specific technical programming areas.

There will be demonstrations on the latest ID48 cloning, eepromming, vehicle entry lock picking and decoding skills, key cutting and profiling machines, in fact everything is on show and can be seen working.

Another area popular with customers is the "info bite" presentations that happen throughout the day, these are 20min talks on various market segments or opportunities you might like to know more about, subjects like, entering the key market, the latest cloning opportunities, Auto frontal information, warrant opening opportunities, benefits of Smart

pro and training courses and opportunities, a full program will be released soon.

This year we have more for the domestic locksmith as well with demonstrations on many of the latest lock picks, opportunities to hone your skills or learn tricks and get a great deal on the new picks, plus the possibility of joining a team carrying out warrant work.

Finally, the Simply Keys show is the very best place for a cracking deal, our prices are rock bottom with amazing deals available on everything, equipment, software, tokens, keys, training. In addition last year we gave away over £20,000 in prizes and this year is no different, come along and you can win a Smartpro, Zedfull, key cutting machine, RW4+ and hundreds of smaller prizes.

To see more information and register your attendance go our website [www.hickleys.com](http://www.hickleys.com) or contact Nicky Summers on 01823 328604

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[www.charlesbirch.com](http://www.charlesbirch.com)



# Bama Shoecare goes from strength to strength helped by excellent summer point of sale

Long established as one of the UK's leading suppliers of insoles, the whole range of BAMA shoe care is now proving to be extremely popular throughout the UK, partly due to the popularity of their posters.

Eight new posters are now available for the Summer campaign through distributors Charles Birch to help communicate direct messages to the customer:

"It is always a challenge for any retailer to communicate the benefits of different shoe care products" said Charles Birch Sales Director, David Barber "with these simple A4 or A3 posters the clear graphic and brief headline tell everything the customer needs to know. When the customer knows what the product is about they will be happy to buy".

The posters are available for the following BAMA products: Trainer Fresh, Clean & Care, Active Universal Care, Sandal Cleaner, Silky Comfort, Gel Comfort Insoles, Sun Colour Insoles and Bama Fresh Insoles.

To receive the posters contact the Charles Birch marketing team, Andrea and Victoria on 0113 243 1155 or email [andrea@charlesbirch.com](mailto:andrea@charlesbirch.com) or contact your local representative.



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# NEW BIRCH TSA LOCKS IN STOCK FOR THE SUMMER



For those travelling to the USA, customs and immigration officials will be able to open these locks without damaging the lock or your case when they need to inspect your goods.

All customs officials carry a special key that will unlock TSA padlocks safely.

Don't forget to stock up on padlocks for the big back to school rush, whether is for students travelling to university, footballers going back to their clubs or kids going back to school July, August and September are the peak months for selling padlocks.



## LUGGAGE TAG CRAZE TAKES OFF

Following their launch in the last issue of Cutting Edge, Charles Birch are reporting a huge increase in the sale of "crazy" luggage tags:

"Excuse Me, Not Your Bag", "Hands Off" and the Owl are the early front runners...



## A 'SNEAKY' WAY TO HELP YOU MAKE MORE PROFIT!

Sneakers, Trainers, Pumps... whatever the name, they are probably the most popular of modern footwear.

Surely everyone has at least one favourite pair that they wear until the sole finally wears out... Then what? Into the waste bin with them?...No! That's where you can step in with the help of SVIG.

SVIG have everything you need to easily bring sad looking sneakers, tired trainers and 'past-it' pumps back to life. Their complete kit - with rubber soles, wood lasts, specialist glues and even the press - is making a big difference for many UK repairers. If you're not already one of them, then you are really missing a great opportunity!

The press, manufactured by SVIG's partner company Fratelli Barbieri Srl definitely makes a difference. Leave the shoes in the press for just 40 seconds and the gluing is secure. With a base just 25 x 66cms and 90cms tall it will fit into any shop and it costs a lot less than you might expect.

Contact your SVIG wholesaler for more details or go to [www.svig.it](http://www.svig.it) to find out how they can help you today - While you are on the SVIG website check out their rubber cup soles in new sizes.



## SEE THE LIGHT!

Light colours and light weight, SVIG have them both.

Their popular SU552 and SU553 sneaker soles are now available in white as well as the standard black. Perfect for revamping summer footwear!

SVIG work hard to meet the challenges faced by today's footwear. The biggest of which is how to combine comfort AND lightness. That's why SVIG are currently developing a new and innovative foam rubber material that combines extreme lightness with flexibility and performance.

For more updates keep checking the SVIG website or follow them on Facebook and a full 'reveal' will be here in the next issue of Cutting Edge magazine...



**Hickleys**

# Smart Pro

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Smart Pro is the cutting-edge, easy-to-use device for easily programming transponder keys, proximity keys and remotes and for reading the PIN codes for numerous manufacturers. screen user interface and incorporates the entire Advanced Diagnostics Info Quest database with over 5000 vehicle models.

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# THE END OF SHOE REPAIR – SOLES IN A TUBE (Part 2)



In the last issue, we discussed a few options that the Renia – QuickSohl shoe repair paste offers: Quickly filling holes and rips in shoe soles, especially the “plastic” variety. Now these ideas were aimed more towards giving a “work horse” pair of shoes an extension of their useful life, and not so much for a “good as new” repair on an expensive pair of dress shoes or sneakers. But QuickSohl can provide some help in that department as well – let’s have a look at what is possible!

## DEALING WITH HOLLOW SOLES AND HEELS - LAYING SOME GROUNDWORK

If you have been following our Material Identification series here in the Magazine (the individual episodes are available at <http://www.renia.com> as well), you know how to recognize and work with a Thermoplastic rubber sole: The materials melts with Thinner, and the Rehagol/Colle de Cologne combination is the key to

a successful bond. But one problem remains: These soles often have a honeycomb structure, to save weight, so there may be very little material to bond to! If this profile is not too deep, there is an easy fix: You can fill up the structure with QuickSohl, and then bond to that once it has cured completely. If you need more than a layer thickness of 3-4 mm, it is better to work in stages, to ensure that each layer can dry properly. Let the layers sit at least overnight before applying the next one. If the comb structure is too deep, or if you are dealing with a hollow heel (often found on ladies’ shoes), this method won’t work, or take far too long: If you fill up the entire empty space at once, only the surface will dry, and lock in the rest of the solvents beneath – that will keep the paste liquid and prevent it from ever curing. There is another way though: Stuff the hollow parts tightly with paper first. Leave some room at the top. Then, cover the filler with a thin layer of QuickSohl (not more than 3-4 mm) and let it

dry overnight. This will also provide a good base for the next step in the repair – attaching a replacement sole or heel to your newly created, much larger surface on the shoe bottom!

## THE GREAT EQUALIZER – GETTING SOLES AND HEELS LEVEL AGAIN

People tend to wear out their soles and heels in different ways – you can tell how they walk by looking at their shoe soles, basically. That means potentially very uneven wear and tear, and while one side may have a lot of outsole left, the other side may be down into the midsole or even the welt already. Same with the heel – and these uneven surfaces have to be leveled again before you can attach a replacement. Probably the most flexible and convenient way to do that is with QuickSohl: Remove the old outsole or heel first, and then clean/sand the shoe bottom. Apply masking/painter’s tape around the edge, and then add enough repair paste to create a level surface again – QuickSohl sticks to most

shoe materials, although there are some exceptions. The general rule is that it works on everything you can bond with our Syntic-TOTAL. So look (test) before you leap! Keep in mind that QuickSohl will shrink a bit as it dries, by about 20%, so it is best to add a bit more. Don’t overdo it though, maximum layer thickness should not exceed 3-4 mm. Let it dry overnight and add the next layer if needed. You can always grind down and trim the excess, and then bond the replacement sole or heel to the new, plane surface. In this case, the layer of QuickSohl may be visible from the side – no worries, it takes color! Just dye it or apply Brilliant-Wax, and it will blend in very nicely!

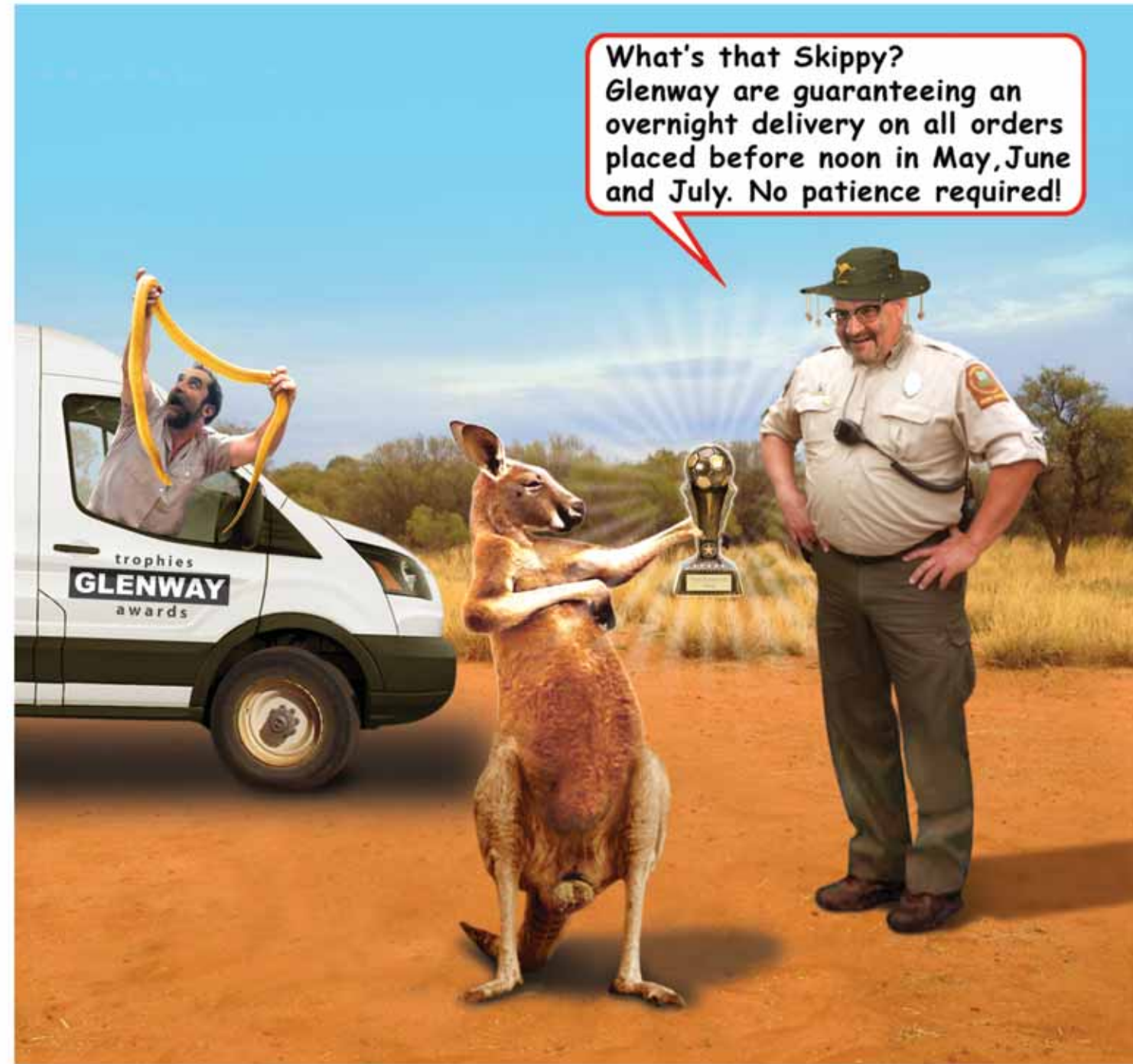
Watch out for the next instalment in this series in your Autumn Cutting Edge magazine, and learn what QuickSohl can do for you on the shoe upper – and find out about the new clear version of this product and its uses!

Dr. Rainer Buchholz,  
Renia Adhesives Cologne



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# SPOTLIGHT



Robin Healy in his beloved MG

warn her like that" said Fairweather, trying hard to hide his blushes.

Right, enough of that...Finish your coffee and get off to see our Mr H, ASAP.. and take a few HobNobs with you. You never know if you ask him nicely he might even take you for a spin in his beloved MG!

Later that afternoon Fairweather sat next to Robin Healy, trying not to scatter biscuit crumbs on the old leather upholstery in the little red sports car as they trundled along a South Yorkshire side road.

An easy question first... what was your favourite subject at school and has it helped you since you left?

I loved Maths, mainly because of an inspirational teacher at my junior school who made it a fun subject.

... and what was your first paid job?

1968, 16 yrs old. I was employed as a trainee estimator in a Silver smelting company in Sheffield. Five pounds two shillings and sixpence per week. Calculating weights and production costs on an ancient Brunsviga Mechanical Counting Machine. Before electronic Calculators became popular.



How and when did you become involved with the shoe repair trade?

I was born into it. My mother and father ran the family business from a workshop in the back garden. I would help out before and after school pairing replacement stiletto blocks and heel covers and cutting belts for miners.

How would you like to earn a living if you were not in the job you are in at the moment?

I'm lazy by nature so something not too strenuous and must be well paid. And only three days a week max.

What do you consider has been your best achievement?

Staying alive.

... and your worst mistake – if you have one?

Sorry, it's far too embarrassing to tell.

Who do you most admire in Business today and why?



Tim Berners Lee, although not strictly a businessman, in his own quiet and unassuming manner, by inventing the World Wide Web he has shaped the future of mankind in a way that no pumped up megalomaniac power and publicity hungry so-called entrepreneur has ever done.

Where is your favourite place?

I love driving so anywhere with smooth roads and fabulous scenery will do. From Derbyshire to the Dordogne. Miami to Marrakesh.



What makes your ideal day away from work?

An ideal day is when the sun shines, the old MG starts first time and everyone else is at work so the roads are mine for an hour or two.

Do you have a favourite piece of music, film or TV programme?

My taste in music is a bit of a mish mash. I like everything from Hymns to High Flying Birds. Puccini to Robert Plant. Films? Not really a film fan. I love foodie TV programs though (probably a little too much these days).

If you were to get stuck in a lift who would you want in there with you, and why?

Can't say, she would be embarrassed.

What is the best piece of advice that someone has given you?

My first boss at George Webb Shoemakers told me to always leave a customer's premises knowing that you will be welcome on your next visit.

... and the worst?

F\*\*k \*\*f and don't come back by the very first customer I called on afterwards.

If you were given £1000 to spend on yourself what would you do with it?

Find a family that deserved a break and give it to them.

What in your opinion is the best thing a shoe repairer can do to improve their business?

Go the extra mile, do a good job for a reasonable price and change the window display more often. Join S.O.M.S.R. and look around at what others are doing.

How do you think 'Brexit' might affect the trade?

This is dangerous ground but for our trade, unlike many UK manufacturing trades, we are not completely dependent on European suppliers and can source from many different countries. However, our valuable relationships with many EU suppliers is vitally important to both us and to them so we need to find a compromise. Soon.

How do you see the future for the Shoe Repair trade?

We have to be honest, it's not a growth industry but it is important that we don't lose sight of the skills that we have developed. Diversification is essential but remember the core business.

...and finally, how would you like to be remembered?

With a smile

Thank you Robin, for the interview, the ride and all the memories!

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Now that Summer is here and everyone is wearing their sandals, pumps and loafers it is the perfect time to tempt your customers with a display of Topy's colourful soles and heels.

## OFFER CUSTOMERS A NEW LOOK

Their soft and flexible Croco sole with its distinctive pattern is especially versatile as it is available in 4 and 6mm thickness.

As well as black, dark brown and brown it is also available in beige, light grey and even White – perfect to give a new look to men's derby brogues!



While we're talking colours, check out the fabulous new colours available in Topy's famous Elysée sheet material.

Ask your wholesaler for details of what's new in this range that is thin, comfortable and abrasion resistant.

Your customers want bright? Offer them 11 colours including green, blue, red, titan... even yellow and orange!

You can even match their new soles with Topy's Tempo range of moulded heels available in the same great range of colours.

## A SMALL ADVANTAGE

Don't forget for VULKOSOFT PU sheets and heels. No more noise, non-slip and no spreading – perfect

for repairing the small heels on ladies' sandals. Available in black, dark brown and caramel.

## NEW FOR 2018

All these and more are in the new 2018 TOPY catalogue. Get one from your wholesaler... or go soon to the NEW Topy website, [www.topy.fr](http://www.topy.fr) – for more information and more new products...

To order all Topy products contact T Colledge & Son on 0117 971 7154 or at [www.tcolledgeandson.com](http://www.tcolledgeandson.com).

Or for information direct from Topy email [info@topy.fr](mailto:info@topy.fr)



# SERVING UP A PERFECT FIT FOR A CUSTOMER

Peter Coulson at Siserve recently had a phone call from a customer who had to update the machines in his shop in central London but had more than a 'little' problem.

"I want a whole kit of machines but I only have a small space to get them into" explained the owner. When he described how small the area was it became apparent that the small space really was just that.

So Peter and his team set about working out how to get everything he needed into it in the most efficient way possible. To start with they took a refurbished Power Unit scouring section which would normally have 2 x 40mm wheels and replaced them with 1 x 75mm wheel and then added the press above – the compressor sits in a cupboard above the machines. The finishing side is a refurbished Power Master and between these goes a Geneva insole stitcher with tinwork and storage bins behind.

Then on the end is a Goodyear outsole stitcher... the finishing touch being a shoe rack over the whole machine.

The result is a successful combination of mixing and matching different makes of machines with the addition of some brightly finished bespoke tinwork to make a big impact in a surprisingly small space.

Because of the location of the shop, delivery was made at 4am and although it took a few hours to get everything in place the extra effort from Siserve's installation team was all worthwhile when they left with a happy customer and all the machines he needed.

"My little shop makes a big impression now, thanks to Peter & his team".

The machines we used were up to 30 years old but because they were the best in their day we still make or replace parts on them proving there is life in them still

and becoming another part of our recycling programme.

To find out how you could make the most of your machines call Siserve on 0116 271 7152 or visit [www.siserve.co.uk](http://www.siserve.co.uk)



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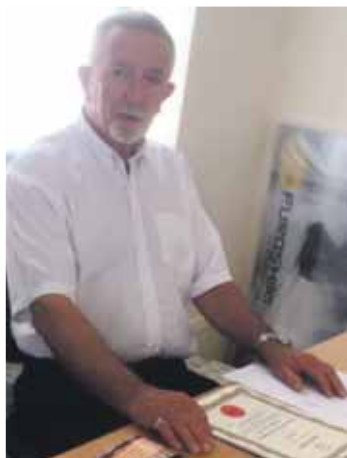
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# Society News

The latest information from the SoMSR office



"Robin, are you busy these days?" asked Chris Wilson.

"Not really" I replied, having retired well over twelve months ago.

"Good" he said. "SOMSR needs a new secretary. You'll do. You can start next week?"

Which is more or less how I came to be spending some of my free time at the nerve centre of the SOMSR organisation currently located in the Charles Birch building on Brown Lane West in Leeds. I have a bank of three computers, two desks, a selection of printers and a huge mound of files and not a single clue about how to go about this job. Technology isn't my strong point and Facebook and Twitter are not really my cup of tea either but here goes....

Under the watchful eyes of Chairman Darren Slater along with Chris Wilson and Caroline Collins, I, Robin Healy, retired gentleman of this trade have been entrusted with "looking after" the members of SOMSR.

**So, how can I help you?**

Give me something to work with. Tell me what you want from your society, it belongs to you. Send me a story. Show off your shop or the quality of your work with a photo or two. Tell me about an unusual repair you have done. If you already put stuff on Facebook, send me the details and I will put it in print for you. Tell me about a trade service you may offer. Ask me for supplier info or where to buy products and hopefully I may be able to help. I've had a lifetime of experience in this trade and if I don't

know the answer myself I probably know someone who does.

You are the Society. I am here to respond to your needs.

Something that has been mentioned before is that membership of SOMSR is open to almost anybody without any qualification whatsoever. Just a thought. If we were to bring in a two or even three tiered membership level would that interest you?

For example if there was an ASSOCIATE level for people who do not practice the skill of shoe repairing as the base level, suitable for suppliers or anyone interested in being a member. After that there could be an APPROVED level whereby anyone wishing to become

APPROVED must submit a

sample of their work for assessment by a panel of experts.

Anyone over a minimum level would qualify for APPROVED status with an enhanced membership and certificate. For those achieving a very high score on their submitted

work perhaps we could offer a FELLOW level.

We are already looking at redesigning the certificates to give them a more professional and authentic look. We're also looking at the possibility of providing a neat wood display stand to exhibit your work either on your counter or in your window with an annual, engraved, membership plaque.

I need feedback. I need comments, discussion, thoughts - so please help me out here or I could be facing the sack for the first time in my life. You can get me on [info@somsr.com](mailto:info@somsr.com), phoning the office at Leeds is a bit hit and miss because I'm only there occasionally but at great personal risk I will divulge my own mobile phone number for those who wish to call or text (I never answer any calls with No Caller ID though).

Robin Healy 07540 991089 (if my wife answers it's probably safer to just hang up).

**It really is as much what can you do for SOMSR as it is what can I do for you so please get in touch.**



## CORDONNIER BLANC

**Fifty Shades of Brexit, for this edition we have a little story from a French cordonnier or shoe repairer called Cyril Blanc who works from his shop on the Rue Henri IV in Castres, France.**

It's a beautiful and important medieval town situated on the ancient trade routes between Toulouse to the west and Montpellier to the east, in the province of Languedoc, part of the French Midi.

In his own words (roughly translated by myself) Cyril has a long standing passion for repairing high quality

shoes. In particular he loves working with Church, Weston, John Lobb and Berluti to name but a few. He comments that it is a privilege to be asked to restore worn footwear to its original condition, an aim he is never bored with even after many years in the trade. Cyril is an artisan who follows the rules of his predecessors to ensure that his efforts are appreciated by his customers. As he says "it is with love and passion that I repair and "bichonne" (mollycoddle in English) the shoes left with me. True pride in a skilled craft.

Some illustrations of his work, before and after...



## I SETTLED FOR IZETTL



**SOMSR Chairman, Darren Slater of Sole Saver in Perth**

**I use this system in my shop and find it easy to use including taking card payments and I also find it invaluable to track and manage my stock.**

On the back end it's so easy to send all my sales and stock information over to my accountant with just an email.

It takes a bit of time to set up but is well worth the time and effort as it makes running the shop and doing the bookwork a simple matter. I have looked at several EPOS systems but the cost for an independent retailer seemed not to be worth it, then I found iZettle. I have now been using it for the past five years and I am pleased to recommend it to other SOMSR members.

The other tool I use in my shop is

the Swipii loyalty card system

This little gem lets me and several other independent retailers in the town compete with the bigger shops' loyalty card systems.

There is one card for several shops and so customers do not have to rake through lots of cards to find it. It also comes as a handy key-ring card or smart phone app.

I realise that these tools won't be



for everyone, and that you may be using other systems, but otherwise I can recommend giving these a go. If you are using other systems and are pleased with the results, please let me know so we can pass these on as well.

**Darren Slater**

## BADGES OF OFFICE

**Junk perhaps... to some. But to others they are redolent of long gone generations, a reminder of the passing of time that we have all experienced, some more than others.**

I'm talking about The Regalia of course. The chains of Office of former Presidents, Chairmen and officials from various sections of the Boot and Shoe trade. SOMSR are the custodians of a collection of highly prized emblems and insignia which belong to an age of Alderman and Town clerks. Armstrong Sideleys and policemen on the beat. Men who wore tweed westcotts with a fob watch, chain and an Albert worn in its properly intended manner. These badges and livery collars are inscribed with the

names of men who quite possibly served their country first before serving their trade. And both with pride.

The photos do not do these fascinating pieces of our history justice. Intricate filigree work, beautiful enamel and engraving done, not with a fancy computer, but by hand and sight.

For those who would like see them for themselves they will hopefully soon be on view at the world famous Northampton Boot and Shoe Museum alongside Elton John's "Tommy" platforms and a pair of old football boots belonging to someone called Beckham.



**If you are proud of what you do and would like to showcase your skills, please send us a story, with pictures, for inclusion in a future edition of Cutting Edge. Email to [info@somsr.com](mailto:info@somsr.com)**

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# SILCA STAY AHEAD WITH NEW TEXAS 80 BIT CLONING SOLUTION

Silca have produced the new unique T80+ technology which will enable all Silca customers to clone the popular Ford, Toyota, Hyundai and Kia models for the first time.

What you will need:

- Silca T80+ Transponder Chip
- Silca RW4 Plus or Silca Fast Copy Plus
- Silca M-Box
- An internet connection

To update your Silca RW4 Plus or Fast Copy Plus machines, Silca customers just need to access Silca Remote Services by downloading this programme on to

their laptop or computer. This download is available from the "Downloads" section of the [www.charlesbirch.com](http://www.charlesbirch.com) website under "KEY CUTTING".

The Silca Customer Services department will be very pleased to assist all customers with updating their Silca RW4 Plus or Fast Copy Plus machines to ensure that every customer has the latest technology available to them.

"It is really important that all Silca customers who own a RW4 Plus or Fast Copy Plus machine make the most of the latest Silca innovations by downloading the latest FREE updates. These updates are simple and easy to install and will ensure that all customers gain the maximum benefit from their Silca machines" said Craig Jordan, Silca Customer Services Manager at Charles Birch.

Up to £500.00 Trade In Offer against current transponder devices.

Charles Birch are pleased to offer up to £500.00 for trading in current

transponder devices when purchasing a brand new Silca RW4 Plus – M-Box package.

For more information please contact the Silca Services Team on 0113 200 3926 or contact your local Charles Birch representative.



## VIBRAM DUPLA: STILL TOP OF THE TOPPIECES AFTER 30 YEARS

Whilst other toppiece materials have come and gone, Vibram Dupla remains constant with the same, multi-directional pattern in the TOP 85 rubber compound that combines great durability with grip for the customer and a clean, sharp finish for the repairer.

This twin toppiece also includes a layer of Dupla rubber compound to ensure excellent bonding and provide extra stability especially on the smaller sizes.

"Our shoe repairers have always liked the simple minimalist pattern as well as the dependability of the product and of course the Vibram brand" said Charles Birch Sales Director, David Barber

"now they are also appreciating the new, lower, special offer prices.

Vibram Dupla toppiecing is available in Black, Tobacco (Dark Brown) and Capuccino (Tan) in cut toppieces and strips from 1¼" to 3¼"

Vibram Dupla is also available in eight colours in manageable 56 x 42cm sheets in Black, Tobacco, Capuccino, Sand, Deep Red, Blue and Grey.

For more information visit [www.charlesbirch.com](http://www.charlesbirch.com) or contact your local Charles Birch representative.



[www.cuttingedgemag.co.uk](http://www.cuttingedgemag.co.uk)

# RAW POWER



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The Real Multi Purpose Cement  
Open time: 5-40 minutes  
850 g (1 ltr) with brush  
4 kg (5 ltr)  
Free of Toluene and MEK!  
For all materials, even Vinyl (PVC) - the most versatile option!
- Super-FIX**  
All Purpose Cement  
Open time: 5-50 minutes  
850 g (1 ltr) with brush  
4 kg (5 ltr)  
Free of Toluene and MEK!  
For all materials except Vinyl (PVC), dries clear.
- Syntic-TOTAL**  
Plastics adhesive  
Open time: 5-30 minutes  
850 g (1 ltr) with brush  
4 kg (5 ltr)  
Free of Toluene and MEK!  
For all materials except EVA - can be used cold!
- top-fit**  
High-Power Cement  
Open time: 5-40 minutes  
850 g (1 ltr) with brush  
8 kg (10 ltr)  
Free of Toluene and MEK!  
For all materials except Vinyl (PVC), extremely high green strength, even on wet leather!

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# THE WAIT IS OVER...

Hickleys the Auto locksmith experts and exclusive distributor for the Advanced Diagnostic products are pleased to announce the release of the new Smart Pro key programmer.

The new Smart Pro is an OBD key programmer that works with most vehicle makes and models and enables transponders keys, remote keys and proximity keys to be programmed to the vehicle memory.

The Smart Pro is easy to navigate with intuitive software on a 10" colour touch screen, with a huge memory on a quad core processor central to its future proof design. In addition the Smart Pro incorporates the Advanced Diagnostics "Info Quest" (IQ) huge database built into the Smart Pro which means the information required to complete the programming is always at your fingertips.

The Smart Pro has a tailored and flexible purchase solution that can suit all customer needs whether you are a small user or beginner, right through to a busy Auto locksmith doing many vehicles a day. You can purchase individual software's or software kits, top up with tokens on a pay as you go basis or buy UTP (unlimited token plan) transforming your coverage to 100% of vehicles available.

The Smart Pro also has 10 software modules for popular cars included free of charge and these modules are free to use for the life of the tester. In addition the Start-



The new Smart Pro from Hickleys

up offer includes 3 months of unlimited use therefore for the first 3 months you can program as many vehicles as you want completely free of charge.

The 10 modules included are:

- ADS100 Ford® Europe/USA
- ADS102 General Motors
- ADS105 Peugeot/Citroën
- ADS109 Suzuki
- ADS110 Honda/Acura
- ADS112 Nissan
- ADS115 VAG
- ADS117 Mitsubishi
- ADS118 Hyundai®/Kia
- ADS125 Toyota®/Lexus

With the addition of the Smart Aerial the Smart Pro is transformed into a transponder reader and can quickly and easily identify transponder types, in addition the Smart Aerial can carry out transponder production procedures necessary for pre coded transponders on vehicles such as VAG & Fiat.

For owners on MVPPro or AD100Pro there are great trade in options which enables owners to trade in their old machine and transfer the software or tokens to their new Smart Pro, every trade in still receives 10 free software's and the first 3 months free to use.

When purchasing a new or trade in

Smart Pro key programmer from Hickleys you benefit from 12 months warranty and importantly 12 months free technical support from our team of key programming specialist. Furthermore our loan scheme ensures you are never without your programmer ensuring you can continue programming. The hugely popular technical support and extended warranty package can be extended year after year.

**To find out more about the Smart Pro and receive a demonstration or quotation contact our sales team on 01823 328532 or visit our website at [www.hickleys.com](http://www.hickleys.com)**

## TRANSPORTS OF DELIGHT

We recently, proudly took delivery of our new delivery lorry.

Our previous one had put in sterling service for the past several years, and has now been sent away to live on a nice farm somewhere, with friendly ducks and sheep. Probably the same farm that all of my old pet dogs went to when they got too long in the tooth.

We have our lorries built to a very specific design. Big and tall enough to get plenty of our equipment on

board, but small enough to get into places that a normal 7-tonner wouldn't dare approach!

We like having our own delivery lorry. It not only looks great, we believe it helps us offer the best possible, most professional delivery / installation service to our customers. We are in charge of every stage of the operation from building your machinery through to delivering it on our lorry, with our people, using our delivery tooling.

Gary Lewis  
Standard Engineering Ltd



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CHARLES  
**BIRCH**  
GROUP

# CUTTING EDGE / SOMSR GOLF DAY.

**JUNE 15TH 2018**

A return to the popular De Vere Staverton club (somewhere near Daventry) on a bright and slightly less breezy day than the preceding one brought a keen band of players from all aspects of the trade together for this annual function. Representatives from the repair, multiple, wholesale and manufacturing industries put aside their differences for a few hours to play golf as gentlemen do, or should.

It's a fine course but as the first three or four holes are in a steep downwards direction ergo the next lot are in a steep upwards direction. And so on for 18 holes.

The golf was good, the company excellent with the eventual winner being Trevor Smith with Sid Hawkins and Steve Norris taking second and third respectively. Dave Pollard won the Longest Drive and Gary Unwin took the Nearest to the Pin trophy.

And apparently my name has been changed to "Sandy" because I spent so much time in the bunkers.

Special thanks to Tim Wilford of Glenway for not only providing the trophies but also for sponsoring some of the players. A fine fish and chip supper just finished off the day nicely.



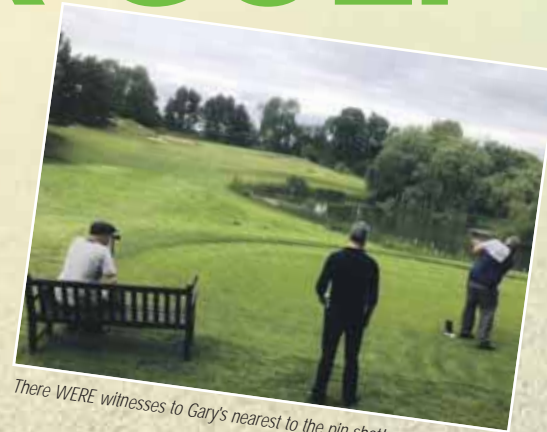
Ready to Tee off



2018 Golf Day Winner, Trevor Smith with CE Chairman, Chris Wilson



Dave Pollard and Chris Wilson



There WERE witnesses to Gary's nearest to the pin shot!



Steve Norris and Chris Wilson



That man again with Gary Unwin



'Sandy' in a Bunker



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# Team Talk

With Summer upon us and back-to-school season approaching we gathered the Cherry Blossom Sales team to get the low down on their go-to shoe care products.



### Paul Lister Freshen up!

Paul, our Sales Director, is always on his feet – either working all hours of the day or out running. As a result, his footwear can suffer and so his go-to product is Cherry Blossom's Shoe Deodorant.

Paul likes to freshen up his footwear with this easy-to-use deodorant, meaning he can stay on his feet and reap rather than 'reek' the benefits.



### Pam Turner Walking on sunshine!

Pam's our sunshine girl, her motto is work hard, play hard – meaning when she's not at work pushing Telesales, she's jetting off somewhere hot. Pam's shoes match her personality, so she relies on coloured shoe creams to keep that vibrant footwear holiday-ready.



Pam's our sunshine girl, her motto is work hard, play hard – meaning when she's not at work pushing Telesales, she's jetting off somewhere hot. Pam's shoes match her personality, so she relies on coloured shoe creams to keep that vibrant footwear holiday-ready.



### Nick Poole Go green but stay clean

Nick Poole, Cherry Blossom's UK Sales Manager, often spends his down time on the golf course, so he has to make sure his footwear looks the part. Despite the warmer

and drier weather, we all know that the British climate is unpredictable, so he relies on Cleaner and Protector. He cleans up his shoes, puts on a layer of Protector and heads out to work on his game.



### Martin Reeves Pro-footballer, pro-dad

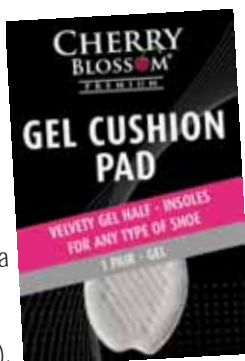
Martin Reeves, our National Account Manager, used to be a professional footballer, so he will always have a tin of Dubbin to hand. It also means he has a style

standard to maintain, meaning his go-to product is traditional polish. When he's not looking after his own appearance he's making sure his children's shoes look the part and, especially when they're back at school, he couldn't live without Cherry Blossom's Scuff Cover.



### Vicky Orme Comfort all day long.

As well as a love for shoe care, Vicky who works in Telesales, has a love for shoes (particularly summer sandals).



### Nick West Party proofer!

Nick, our other National Account Manager, is the social butterfly of the group, when he's not at his quaffing club, he's attending gigs or off to cricket matches. Nick's go-to product is

Cherry Blossom's Ultra Repel, meaning his footwear is always protected from rain and stains, whatever the occasion.



# STAY ALL WHITE THIS SUMMER WITH



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# SHINE AWAY SUMMER SCUFFS WITH RENOVATING POLISH FROM BIRCH

Introduced by the Charles Birch Group alongside their BIRCH Premium Polish, the BIRCH Renovating Polish is designed to renovate leather and polish out scuffs and scratches in particular.

BIRCH Renovating Polish is much more heavily pigmented than the standard Premium Polish enabling it to restore footwear effectively. However as it also contains Carnauba Wax it also buffs up to a very high shine.

BIRCH Renovating Polish comes in nine popular colours including Red, Grey and the ever popular summer colour white. As with the Premium Polish BIRCH Renovating Polish comes in an attractive display box with a tear off display panel.



## CASALI CARE COMBINES CRAFT & COMFORT !

Since the 1970s, Casali has stood out for its care and precision in the production of shoe accessories, supplying products for the shoe industry as well as for the care and repair of shoes across Europe. Each piece is carefully created from the modelling stage right through to mould production and pressing, using the latest technology and carefully selected materials to produce high-quality products.

Our main product is Double layer top lifts.

After years of research Casali has found the perfect combination between the soft part of the dowel lift which comes into contact with the ground, and the rigid part which envelops the pin. As a result, Double Layer boasts a number of mounting advantages:

- Easy workability
- Easily milled with an optimal aesthetic finish once mounted.
- X-ray quality control Quality control is performed on the product line to check for the presence of air bubbles which could conceivably become noticeable after mounting.
- Ample guarantee for the firmness of the pin. The particular shape of the pin, together with the material's rigidity, guarantees the maximum amount of hold.
- Three different kind of pin: regular, thin and inflex.
- Silent: The part of the dowel lift that touches the ground is softer than a normal mono component dowel lift and this makes for a silent walk.
- Comfortable: A pleasant, relaxing walk on any surface!
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- The right lifetime: once the soft part wears through, it performs just like a regular heel

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# Cutting remarks from the **SOLE TRADER**



## DON'T LET THEM ESCAPE

I was checking through my card statement recently when I noticed the initials UPT after a transaction listing.

That acronym can mean many things and I don't know what the bank uses it for, but to me as a marketer it is a very important retail pointer. Units Per Transaction shows you the average number of items purchased by a customer. It's fairly easy to calculate, just divide the number of items sold by the number of transactions over a given period of time and you have the UPT. The figure can relate to total sales, specific product areas or specific sales people, it depends on business size and your specific goal. Calculating it is one thing but your retail success and profits depend on increasing that figure i.e. on increasing the number of products each customer buys.

### KEEP CUSTOMER INTEREST

I have said many times in this column that your existing customer is your best customer

and that if you give customers a good experience they will buy and return to buy again. That's good but to increase the UPT you have to encourage them to buy more whilst they are in your shop and that takes skill and application.

So how do you achieve an increase in UPT? Firstly, you have to provide the correct retail environment as it is no good hoping that a customer will buy more when they can't see or relate to your products. We live in a world of extreme choice where customers are used to freely browsing products both in bricks and mortar shops and endlessly online. As a physical shop you have the opportunity to allow customers to see and feel the product. Uniquely on some occasions, for example for key cutting, they have to wait in your shop for the product to be made. This is an ideal opportunity for them to wander around your displays and choose another product to buy - be it a key ring, a zippo lighter or some shoe

care. Your displays are key to increasing sales per customer, they must be attractive, interesting and clean - no one wants to pick up a leather purse or even a tin of polish to feel dust and grime, I know it is not as easy in a repairing environment but with modern extraction and diligence it can and must be done.

### A GOOD EXPERIENCE

As a provider of repairing and artisanal services you are uniquely able to talk with your customers in an advisory capacity. You have the knowledge and skill, something that most retailers lack and it is certainly not available on the web, excepting endless star ratings and suspect testimonials. You have to use that position of trust to increase your sales per customer even if by only adding a key ring to that key cutting sale. Too often the key is in a bag, the money in the till and your mind is on the next repair forgetting the customer in your

shop is the best you have. You must use that relationship and increase the UTP.

Your customer relationships will turn browsers into buyers, and buyers into repeat customers.

### BETTER THAN PROMOTIONS

You may be tempted to try and increase UPT by offering discounts or promotions but you don't need to do that. Promotions have their place and will increase UPT but only at the expense of margins. Good customer relationships and customer experiences will always win in the race to good profits.

It's a tough environment on the High Street but the winners will always be those shops that customers enjoy visiting - think about it - why would you go somewhere that you don't enjoy visiting? Make sure your shop is a winner - make it pleasant, interesting and above all put the customer first and they won't want to escape.

**Soletrader**

## CROCO

**98 x 64 cm**  
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- non-directional
- anti-shock
- slip-resistant

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Excellent resistance to abrasion, anti-slip and comfortable walking conditions.  
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## VULKOSOFT

**50 x 50 cm**  
**50 x 25 cm**  
**6 mm**

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# THIS IS MY LIFE... Part 2

It's February 1981, I had just turned 20 and I saw another advert in the Evening Standard for a shoe repairer in the City of London. Off I went for my interview to Lime St, where I first started with Auto-Magic. The Company looking for a shoe repairer was Pringle Dry Cleaners who now trade as City Slickers. I didn't know beforehand, but I was competing with a guy I had worked briefly with in Fenchurch St for Auto-Magic, Ronnie Carver. Jeff Pringle, the Boss, had decided to offer both of us a day's 'assessment', Ronnie in Lime St and me in his Aldgate East branch. He decided to give me a lift in his new car, a Porsche 911 Turbo, how fantastic, except I had to 'sit' in the back, very uncomfortable!



## A CHANCE MEETING

During that day a chance meeting occurred that was to have a profound effect on my future career. Around lunchtime, a familiar face went past the shop window, it was a friend of mine from Auto-Magic. Colin Grenville was a great guy, full of fun and had made the busy days fly by when we had worked together. 'Colin' I shouted, 'what are you doing around here?' 'Looking for staff. What are you doing?' I replied 'Looking for work!' He suggested we met after work in a pub around the corner for a chat. There we agreed that I would start working for him the next day. Pringle had no place for me, but now it didn't matter, it turned out to be a life changing event for me.

South London Cobblers had around 6 shops in Central and South London and were looking to expand. The Boss, Colin Slade was an ambitious character. The first Branch I worked at was Broad St station next to Liverpool St, sadly long gone, reduced to rubble to create the Broadgate Development. This went well and after a few months I was promoted and was drafted in across the road to the Liverpool St arcade branch. Colin Grenville and I worked there for a few months and we worked well together, increasing the takings and keeping the Boss happy. Unfortunately, Colin became very ill with a back problem and was later diagnosed with cancer of the spine. We had worked together for

less than a year when he passed away, a very sad loss to all that knew him, especially his close friend John Tredwell. I had now started a family, moved in above a Shoe Repair shop in Crystal Palace, owned by Colin Slade and franchised to another friend of mine, Dave Fisher, whilst looking to further my career.

## ANOTHER PROMOTION

I was promoted to Manager of the Liverpool St Branch and later took on a franchise there, which I kept for about 10 years. Throughout that period, as an ambitious youngster, I took on a few more Franchises from South London Cobblers including Charing Cross Station and their Walworth Road branches. Whilst franchising was better than working for a boss, I still had ambitions to own my own business, this would come later. Along the way I made some good friends and created a few proteges, Eddie Hayes in Orpington being one of them, thankfully still in the Trade and more importantly, running his own successful businesses. That's something that makes me very proud and I'd like to think I've done my bit to help him on his way!

Much later, in 1992 I heard through a friend that someone we both knew was looking to open a shop in Surrey and was looking for a partner. I made contact and we agreed a deal over a few beers, I was to run the business with him

keeping control of the financial side.

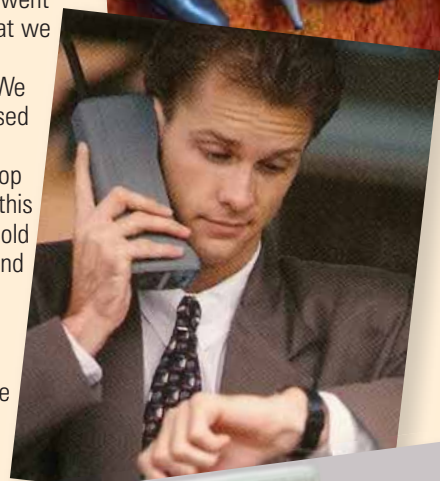
He had his own shops elsewhere in London and Kent but saw me as an ambitious businessman with a view to getting started on my own. I had just gone through a divorce and was more ambitious than ever before, I had lost ground financially because of the divorce so I was more motivated than I had ever been.

The partnership seemed to work well for a couple of years but went sour when it became clear that we were at odds with how a 'partnership' should operate. We agreed a deal where I purchased his half of the business and I continued to run my Oxted shop over the next 9 years. During this period, I also purchased and sold a few more shops in and around the area.

My time running my own businesses was the happiest period of my career, being able to make my own decisions on how the business was run, when to invest, what to buy, what knew product lines I could introduce to increase turnover and increasing my knowledge of the Trade. I took the opportunity to join SOMSR and take a City and Guilds exam to increase the provenance to my customers, assuring them that I was both skilful and knowledgeable about the services I offered.



Life in the Yuppie 80s...



Things were working out well for Keith.

## A BIG INVESTMENT

In 1997, I decided to invest in computer engraving, a massive investment for a small businessman like me, but one of the best decisions I have ever made. It was early days for computer engraving and it wasn't something you could call a friend up and ask for help with when you had a problem. I spent many nights working late to develop my knowledge about engraving but loved every minute of it. I had purchased the 'Universal' machine from Mastergrave and bought it on HP over 5 years, it paid for itself after only 18 months! It taught me a good lesson, don't be afraid to invest if you believe, following much research, that it's the right decision! I see so many people in our Trade today who have good businesses but hold back on investment, sometimes choking their business, such a shame.

Over the next 5 years or so, I learned much about our Trade, business and life in general. How to treat customers, how to look after staff, how to diversify, something our Trade was now desperate to achieve. Shoe Repair, as a percentage of our businesses, was dropping and we all had to find other ways of making money. Most of us in the Trade had fully embraced diversification when we took on key cutting, but many had still not fully embraced it. Fortunately, I had, and key cutting became at least 35% of my turnover, I hated it when a customer gave me a key I couldn't copy. I always tried to obtain a blank if it wasn't in stock, great customer service is something I considered, and still do, to be an essential part of any business.

## A WINNING DECISION

Next, I introduced watch repairs, batteries, straps and link removal,

etc, first instigated in a major way by the Timpson chain. I got involved in watches following a presentation by Timpson at a Cutting-Edge show. Coming off a winning decision with engraving, I felt I couldn't lose, so I invested in some equipment from Charles Birch and off we went, another relative stab in the dark, but one I was committed to, another good decision! Watch repairs in shoe repair outlets was starting to become the norm and more and more customers locally were coming to me rather than the overpriced local jewellers.

In addition, I introduced a fully comprehensive range of Woly shoe care products from Shoestring. I figured this brand would suit my image and I could charge a premium as they couldn't be bought at the Supermarket. This was another good decision, my turnover on these products increased my turnover greatly. I used to love reminding my customers about my range of shoe-creams, well over 40, and the vast range of laces I knew had, it was impressive, even though I say so myself! I always made sure I cleaned customers shoes with the products I sold, this gave them confidence in my knowledge, but crucially, resulted in them buying the product!

During my 25 years as a shoe repairer, I learnt much. As a Country, we had been through two recessions and Thatcherism, but I had come out of the other side in a good position. I was still highly motivated, had approached the dreaded 40 and had ambition beyond shop keeping! In 2002, a New opportunity was about to present itself that I hadn't envisaged but would prove to be the best decision of my life!...

**There will be even more from Keith next time...!**



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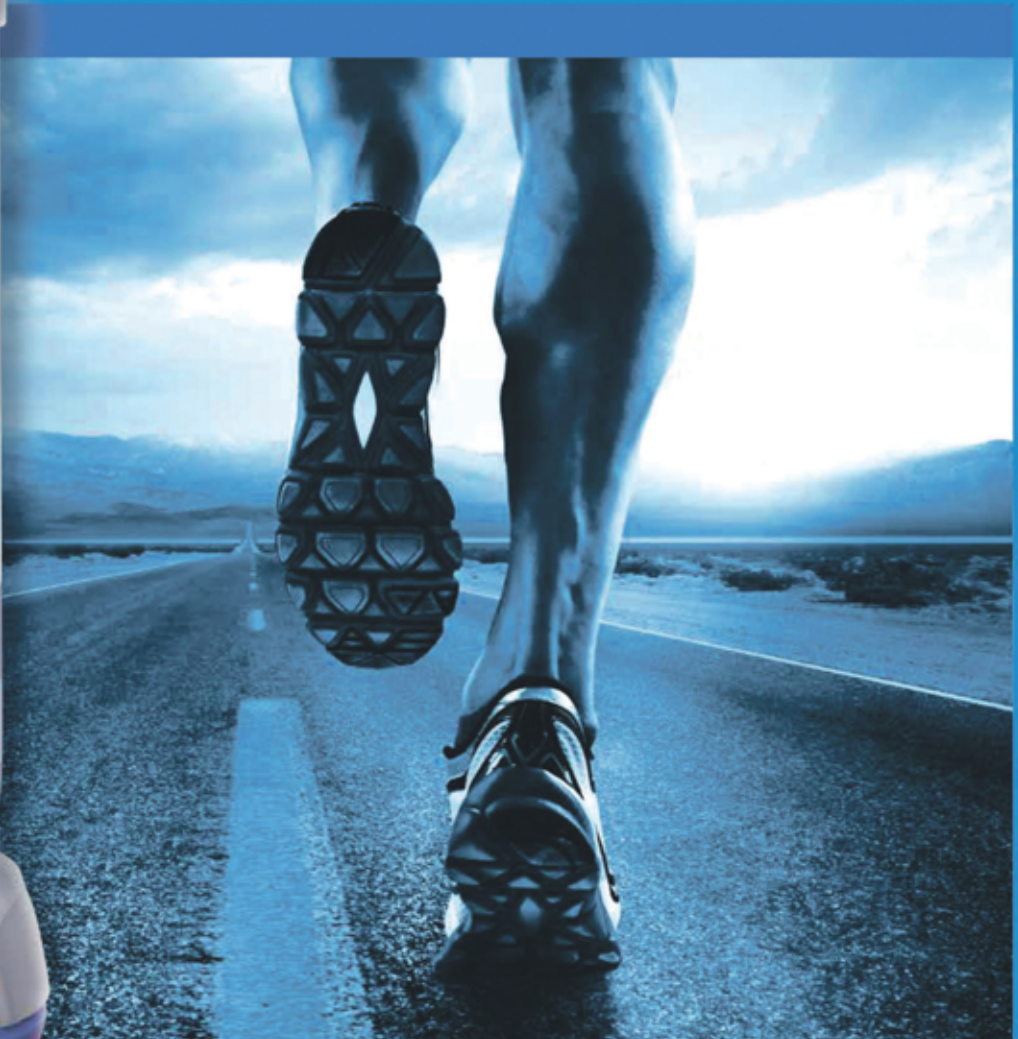
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