

Fortress celebrates Queen's Award hat-trick



Fortress Interlocks, experts in automation safety and interlock systems, has been awarded its third Queen's Award for International Trade, recognising the outstanding growth in overseas sales over the last three years.

Fortress Interlocks is amongst 230 businesses nationwide recognised this year in categories that include sustainable development, promoting opportunities through social mobility, innovation and international trade. In 2007, the company won the Queen's Award for Innovation and in 2008, the Queen's Award for International Trade. Winners of the International Trade Award must demonstrate substantial growth in overseas earnings relative to business size and sector.

This award is the result of a 5-year strategy by Fortress Interlocks to build export growth, targeting regions such as Europe, Asia Pacific (including China) and The Americas. Interlocks are traditionally a mechanical solution but Fortress prides itself on embracing the digital revolution to incorporate electronic and software-based solutions for customers. Business leaders in different local markets are empowered to make their own decisions and an online distributor portal tracks global success, encouraging other members of the sales force to replicate such efforts.

Jo Smith, Managing Director of Fortress Interlocks commented "Our business strategy is based upon innovative customisation, creating robust solutions to allow our customers protect their employees and productivity, whilst our competitors have gone down a route of standardisation". In 2016/17, total sales were £22.5million, with export sales accounting to £18.3 million. Over the last three years, sales have grown by over 62%.

The company is committed to growth by innovation, continuing its development of intelligent interlocks and most recently adding connectivity to its robust amGard*pro* range – with safety information exchanged using either PROFIsafe or CIP safety protocol.

Fortress also recently launched the ncGard product range, a complete solution of non-contact safety switches for safeguarding machinery. In autumn the company will launch ATOM, the first high coded RFID gate switch designed in a high robusticity and ultra-compact form factor. When discussing future growth, Smith said "Winning this award is testament to the effort we have made to take our solutions to new markets. Our target is to continue to grow sales at 10% per year, and be the automation safety supplier of choice in the machine safety market."

Fortress Interlocks is based in the Midlands and prides itself on a family-oriented culture. Protecting productivity but most importantly people are at the heart of the business, ensuring loved ones working in dangerous environments return home safely to their families every day. Bespoke solutions can be provided for all industrial applications from power



generation, automotive and steel manufacturing, to food and beverage processing, materials recycling and construction. All products ranges are compliant with the latest machinery safety standards and independently approved by TUV.

Notes

Fortress Interlocks has a simple mission: to help businesses protect their human and capital assets. We do this by designing and manufacturing safety interlock systems for industrial applications. These range from power generation, steel making and automotive manufacturing to food and beverage processing, materials recycling and construction.

Through the use of interlocks, our products ensure all activities are undertaken in a safe, predetermined sequence. This creates a safer workplace where employees are safeguarded from injury and equipment is protected from damage. Our product portfolio includes trapped key interlocks (mGard), heavy duty safety gate switches, with and without guard locking (amGard Pro) and standard duty interlocks with in-built control functionality (tGard). All product ranges are compliant with the latest machinery safety standards and independently approved by TUV.

Because our products are modular, they can be adapted to just about any safeguarding scenario in just about any industrial environment. If one of our existing products can't solve your problem, our extensive experience and know-how also allows us to provide bespoke products. With over 40 years' experience, we've become known in the industry for innovative design, robust engineering and reliability.