

now (late February)," Veerman confirms. "We have also been selling winter tyres in markets where sales weren't previously that strong, such as the Benelux. We've never sold so many winter tyres before. It has been a great success, also in terms of profitability. In fact, winter tyre sales are so good that at the moment the question from our customers is not 'do you have this particular brand?' – it is 'do you have anything for me in this size?'"

At the time of talking with Rutger

Veerman in late February, Deldo was processing many pre-orders for summer tyres. These orders are handled by Deldo's sales team which, Veerman reports, has now grown to 35 members. Sales staff deal with customer orders and requests in 12 European languages, and the team now includes a newly-added e-commerce team responsible for online orders. "When we sell to dealers, we are not just selling a tyre," notes Veerman. "This sales support is part of an overall package that includes our Just in

Time logistics service, 24/7 availability through our webshop, continuity of stock all under one roof, product support and a constant contact person at Deldo. It is the combination of all these factors that make the difference for our customers."

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Infinity Offering Bond a 'Premium Manufacturer Offer' Alternative in UK

Founded in Pocklington over 40 years ago, Bond International now occupies a 140,000 square foot site on the town's industrial estate and employs nearly 100 local people. In addition, the company operates distribution depots in Chepstow, Stevenage and Redditch, which together employ a further 90 people. And adding an international flavour to the operation are representative offices in both China and Singapore. Bond International reports that these two offices assist in the sourcing of brands that provide an alternative to the 'premium manufacturer offer'. By researching new and competitively priced manufacturing facilities around the globe, Bond has been able to offer exclusive mid-range tyre brands. An example of this is Infinity.

Bond International shares that the Infinity vision is "to create a globally recognised brand, which offers a low cost, high quality, premium economy alternative within the current replacement tyre market, and which currently meets the demands of the worldwide recession." Product quality has been demonstrated by the brand's September 2009 retreadability certification by Bandag and through recent comments by forensic tyre examination specialist Brian Lawton, who stated "Infinity tyres represent an excellent alternative to a mid-range tyre – they are of exceptional quality and at a very affordable price – an attractive value combination."

It is now seven years since Bond International was appointed exclusive UK distri-

butor of Infinity tyres and the company reports that sales and marketing efforts have paid dividends through a growing market share. Within the UK, Infinity brand products are available for the passenger car, 4x4, van and light commercial vehicle sectors – the Infinity OTR, agricultural, industrial and mining tyres available globally are not sold here at present.

Recently additional fitment sizes were announced from three patterns in the infinity line-up. Family car pattern INF-030, small to medium car tyre INF-040 and van radial INF-100 have, reports Martin West, general manager of Infinity Tyres Europe, had their ranges increased in response to "customer requests".

One new size (195/70R14) is being released for the PCR INF 030 pattern. Produced using Infinity's "Eco-Friendly Fuel Efficient"

manufacturing process, the INF-030 tyre possesses distinctive grooves for an increased biting edge generating outstanding all-terrain, all-weather grip according to the company. Five new sizes will be available for the PCR INF 040 pattern: 175/60R15, 175/65R15, 185/60R15, 195/45R16 and 185/50R16. The tyre's characteristics include tighter grip for cornering, improved handling capability and enhanced response, according to Infinity.

The Infinity – Bond route to market involves the utilisation of a head office call centre supported by a field regional sales team. The call centre employs 25 staff and through its Fastrac ordering system currently averages over 700 orders every day. Each operator services an average of 80 live customer accounts and the centre can handle over 3700 inbound and

outbound calls within a single day. Bond's customer base includes both independent retail tyre centres and regional plus national retail tyre groups. The company forecasts 2009 sales to be in the region of £87 million and it aims to reach £100 million by the end of 2010. sg/akb



Infinity has seven new sizes in its 030, 040 and 100 patterns