

## GLUING CAPACITY INCREASED

**WHEN ATLAS GLOBAL SOLUTIONS LOOKED TO INVEST IN FOLDER GLUER TECHNOLOGY FOR ITS CORRUGATED BUSINESS, IT TURNED TO DURAN MACHINERY. NICK COOMBS VISITED THE COMPANY'S PLANT IN IRELAND TO FIND OUT MORE.**

**B**y international group standards, Atlas Global Solutions might be seen as a mid-market player, employing some 550 people across six plants worldwide and generating sales of around \$90 million in 2015. But numbers have an uncanny knack of concealing the real story and that of Atlas is nothing short of remarkable.

Established in Boston MA by Art Mahassel in 1988, the company

now has two further US production facilities in North Carolina and New Jersey, as well as one in China, Poland, a new one in the Czech Republic scheduled to open in 2017 and the modern 95,000 sq ft unit in Cork on Ireland's south coast. What differentiates Atlas from its major competitors is its attitude to packaging in general, according to Noel Finnegan, Operations Manager at Cork. "We're not just packaging manufacturers – we're packaging

# OMEGA PERFORMA FOR IRELAND



John Twigg (left) demonstrated Omega 165 and 210 size folder gluers to Noel Finnegan before the order was placed.

*AS DEMAND FOR MORE COMPLEX WORK GREW, THE COMPANY KNEW ITS CAPACITY FOR STRAIGHTLINE GLUING WOULD NOT SUPPORT ITS AMBITIOUS GROWTH PLANS.*

**Atlas' 95,000 sq ft plant in Cork was opened in 2003 to support computer and electronics companies based in Ireland.**



service suppliers. We take the holistic approach and provide every packaging item that our customers require.”

The commitment to a production facility in Ireland was made in 2003 to support EMC in nearby Ovens. Since then, Atlas’ business with the major electronic and computer companies has gone from strength to strength. The Irish plants of Intel, Dell, Alps, Apple and many others have all generated significant business for the company over the 13 years since it opened in Cork. Mr Finnegan says there is a conscious policy to now supply the pharmaceutical and medical device markets, for which its flexible production capacity and tight quality controls are essential.

Brought in eight years ago to set up Atlas’ corrugated division at Cork, Mr Finnegan has established not only a well appointed production floor, but an enthusiasm amongst the workforce that is now endemic and typifies the company’s overall ethos. “We’re very creative here with our own packaging design department and ISTA Certified Test Laboratory. By getting things right at the very beginning, we not only generate more business but achieve a very high customer

satisfaction rating,” he said proudly.

As demand for more complex work grew, the company knew its capacity for straightline gluing would not support its ambitious plans for new corrugated product lines. Mr Finnegan turned to long time industry colleague Richard Gayer, of Dublin-based Venture Finishing for friendly advice. Mr Gayer, renowned as an astute businessman and canny investor, directed Atlas towards Duran Machinery on account of installing two Omega folder gluers in the space of eighteen months.

“I knew that if Richard had

bought a second Omega the first must be winner,” he said, prior to placing an order for an Omega Performa 165 machine which was delivered in March 2016 and went into production three days later. “It arrived pre-assembled, so was simply a matter of plug-in and go! I’ve never known such a seamless installation at any time in my career and both training and after sales support has been first class,” he enthused.

According to John Twigg, who represents Duran in the UK and Ireland, the choice was not so much whether to buy an Omega, but which model to choose. “Once Atlas had decided on Duran, it was a case of deciding whether to go for a 165cm or 210cm machine. Usefully, Venture Finishing has both, so we were able to demonstrate the options nearby.” In the end, Atlas opted for the Performa 165 as a good first machine and more flexible option across its current job range.



**The Omega Performa 165 was chosen for its all round ability.**

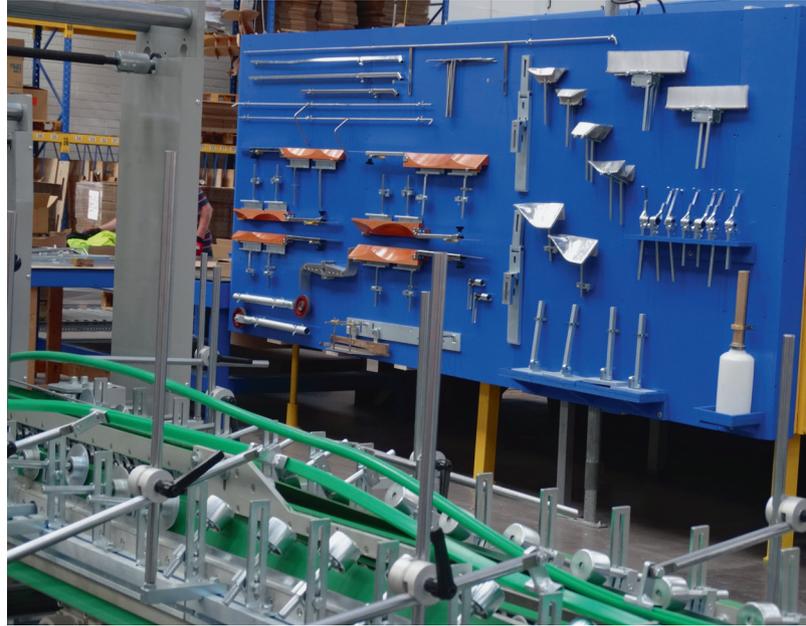
*THE PERFORMA IS VERY MUCH BEING TARGETED AT JOBS FROM THE PHARMACEUTICAL AND MEDICAL DEVICE MARKETS.*

The Omega Performa is one of the seven types of folder gluer manufactured in Istanbul, Turkey by Duran Machinery. It is suitable for carton and corrugated applications and available in three widths — 130, 145 and 165cm. It's described as an efficient and economical machine for straight line, double wall, crash lock and optional 4&6 corners, with single finger servo backfold system. It is also capable of forming inner partitions, Z-folds, conical crash lock and CD boxes at a maximum belt speed of 300m/min.

Still new to the production capacity at Atlas and hungry for work, the Performa is very much being targeted at jobs from the pharmaceutical and medical device markets, where its accuracy and flexibility as well as quick make-readies will be fully appreciated. "Atlas takes a long term view of business and invests to support this concept. Installing the new folder gluer shows our commitment to these customers and while currently under utilised, it will offer huge production capacity as we develop new products," explained Mr Finnegan.

Atlas' creativity extends into materials other than corrugated board, including cartons, wood and foam. With its lean manufacturing base and design and testing capabilities, the company extends beyond package converting into kitting and assembly, with all products delivered by its own fleet of trucks to ensure the best logistics.

As befits an international supplier, Atlas is certified by or



**The tool rack for the Omega typifies the Atlas approach to efficiency**

accredited to ISO 9001-2008 and ISO 14001-2004, as well as ISPM15, ISTA, ROHS & REACH and REPAK. Atlas supplies UN Packaging for dangerous materials (4GV and 4G) and in addition to BC, C, B, E, and triple wall corrugated is innovating with sustainable products like bamboo, which is quick to grow and harvestable in four to seven years (compared with up to 50 years for hardwoods). Furthermore, since harvesting does not destroy the root structure, it means that soil erosion is avoided.

Part of the company's quality drive is contained in its Packaging Assessment scheme, which by analysing how a customer uses packaging in its overall process, allows Atlas to refine products and recommend changes that increase efficiency and reduce cost. The company has numerous case studies that substantiate these claims. In one of them, the carbon

footprint was reduced by switching from foam corners to Airpaq bags, which reduced the number of pallets required from 69 to just one. In another example, by simply re-sizing a box, a pharmaceutical customer enjoyed a 22 per cent cost saving and 20 per cent reduction in pallet requirement.

Atlas Global Services is proud of its commitment to rapid response, a personalised and ongoing customer service, total quality management and providing innovative solutions to changing market trends. "We need to ensure that we always exceed expectations and meet all international standards – and we can't do that without continual investment. The new Omega folder gluer is part of a planned strategy that we shall continue to pursue, which will push our global turnover beyond the \$90 million mark," Mr Finnegan concluded. ■