



RENZACCI UK PLC

PRESS RELEASE

Issue Date : May 2006
Header : A Word of Caution

Cautious is the surprising description Jason Alexander of Renzacci UK gives to his business policy. With a new corporate identity, innovative website, and three major product launches in the last six months alone, LCT met George and Jason Alexander to find out that playing safe does not equal standing still.



George & Jason Alexander

In business your name is everything and for everyone connected with Renzacci UK plc there is a determination that the name stands for top of the range quality – as it has been for the past 34 years.

Renzacci UK has managed to pull off the difficult feat of combining business stability with on-going evolution. The company still maintains the strong links with the initial equipment suppliers – Renzacci SpA and Pony SpA – that launched its operations in 1972 while at the same time adding and developing its products and services to keep pace with changes in the laundry and drycleaning market.

“One of the things that makes us unique is that we haven’t switched and changed,” explains managing director Jason Alexander. “We’ve always gone for quality over price and it has paid off.

“I’ve been in the business for 15 years now and have seen some major companies come and go. In order to deliver the level of service that we want to offer you have to keep control. It’s all very well in the very good times to expand and expand but you have to be aware of the flip side. I am always cautious. There’s a big difference in seizing chances and opportunities and taking a lot of unnecessary risks.

“What I do believe in very strongly and think that’s probably my overriding drive is that I want to be the best. I know that I want to be at the top end of the market and if a customer doesn’t appreciate what we’re trying to do then perhaps it’s not the right customer for us. We are 100 per cent committed to what we are doing.”

It’s an ambition Jason’s inherited directly from his father, George Alexander, who founded the company.

Both attribute a major part of Renzacci’s success is due to George’s background as the owner of a chain of retail drycleaning shops and laundries. It gave him an ideal grounding in knowing how to meet customer expectations.



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In a nutshell, drycleaners and launderers wanted excellent equipment, coupled to quick and efficient service and reliable after-sales back up. And they wanted assurance that when they purchased an item of machinery, it was the beginning of a lasting partnership between supplier and client.

“From the beginning we have been committed to providing top quality equipment and an on-going service package,” says George. “My background is in engineering so I know what makes a good machine and I have only ever been interested in associating the company with but the best equipment available.”

Belief in the overriding merits of quality led George Alexander to Italy where he had heard of a young company manufacturing an impressive range of machines.

“I approached the principle, Mr Renzacci, and really sold myself to him. He was impressed and gave me six months credit. He also allowed me to use the name Renzacci UK which was much, much more than I had been expecting.

“When I came back I went and sold the equipment within months, paid him back straight away and we carried on from there.”

Now chairman, and in semi-retirement, George still has an undimmed enthusiasm for the nuts and bolts of machine design. It’s a passion shared by Jason who admits that even as a child he had a fondness for the workroom and “was always hanging around there”.

Jason - who formally joined the company in 1992, becoming managing director in 1995 the same year the company was incorporated as a PLC - is quick to attribute other qualities to the influence of this father:

“I’ve learned lots from Dad over the years and I’m still learning. He’s given me an awful lot of attitude which is something I’m very grateful for! I will speak out if I believe in something even if it is an unpopular viewpoint.”

As a member of the SLEAT council and the on the TSA Retail Services Committee, Jason is committed to promoting the laundry and cleaning industry.

He accepts that some might find his outspoken approach off-putting:

“I have ruffled feathers, but I think justifiably. For example, the Solvent Emissions Directive. I’m quite heavily involved with this and I’m very blunt about it because it’s something I believe in strongly. It’s not enough to talk about Best Practice we need to ensure that it is put into action. I want this industry to have a future.”

Offering a full range of products for drycleaners and launderers, Renzacci SpA drycleaning machines and Pony finishing equipment remain the bedrock of the company’s range.



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In terms of drycleaning options Jason has no hesitation in recommending Perchloroethylene machines as the cornerstone of a drycleaning operation.

“Perc has traditionally been the machine of choice for a number of factors – it is efficient, reliable and easy to use at all levels of skill. I think it will continue to be the solvent of choice for those same reasons and because the machines we are using today are built from a starting position of environmental and legislative awareness. We need to stand up and promote this fact – not always be in a position of defensively reacting to rumours and misleading reports,” he says.

The new Progress machine, introduced in 2005, comes with only one choice of spec – everything is included!

The Progress features a second wall separator with active carbon, an inverter controller for the drum, Ice Care[®] refrigerated solvent cooling which is automatically adjusted by the Digiplus[®] computer, Air Jet[®] automatic air filter cleaning, Global Wash[®] back plate washing, and comes with Ecowaste[®] distillation waste pump. Built-in air compressors are also included as standard.

Best practice does not come cheap. However, expense may be relative when other factors are taken into consideration.

“We may be five per cent more expensive but that five per cent is nothing over the long term. Money saved on initial purchase is quickly lost when a machine breaks down and there is no back-up or spares or an expensive garment is ruined because they didn’t bother with refrigerated solvent cooling,” says Jason.

“It’s all a matter of thinking long-term.”

The company also offers hydrocarbon and multi-solvent, including Green Earth, drycleaning machines.

Renzacci UK is the sole UK distributor of Pony finishing equipment. The company offers a complete line-up of equipment including tables, presses, cabinets, trouser toppers and garment formers.

“It’s still my belief that Pony offers the best finishing equipment on the market,” says Jason.

Latest addition to the range for 2006 is the Pony CP-LAV/R1, a small rectangular flat bed laundry press with built in boiler ideal for flatwork including sheets, duvet covers and napkins. CP-LAV/RI has dimensions of 1600 by 1300 by 1400 with a working surface of 1500 by 1200mm.

Shirt finishing remains a growth market with the Pony MG402 Shirt former and CCP collar and cuff press offering a versatile and quick way of processing all types of shirts.



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New companies have been added carefully, and chosen for their excellence in their fields, for example, garment conveyors are supplied by ACS and packaging machines from Hawo.

New Zealand air monitoring specialist, Aeroqual Ltd is the latest to join the Renzacci line-up in autumn 2005. The two companies have worked in partnership to develop a line of fixed and hand-held air Perchloroethylene and hydrocarbon air monitoring systems designed to provide drycleaners with a simple and economical method of ensuring machinery is operating to within accepted environmental limits.

Jason explains, "Obviously with the SED we needed to source air quality monitors. We were initially buying from a UK company but we weren't happy with the quality or the support. Quite fortuitously I was contacted by Aeroqual at just the right time. We developed a rapport and worked together on the development of the SM70 fixed air monitor. People love it. It's affordable, easy to use, highly accurate. In three months we've put in more than 50 pieces."

So successful has been introduction by Renzacci UK plc of the Aeroqual Air Monitoring system to the United Kingdom that the company has just announced the extension of its distribution agreement to cover the Republic of Ireland.

"We've been very lucky with our suppliers," reflects George Alexander, "but that luck has also been a matter of planning and making very careful choices."

Like its suppliers, long-service is an attribute of the staff at the company's West London headquarters where many have notched up several decades of service. But George and Jason stress that the professionalism and experience of their staff is a huge factor in the company's ongoing success.

Clients also tend to come back for repeat business. Renzacci UK has installed machines in everything from cruise liners to palaces as well as the more traditional high street locations. Good transport links – the offices are easily accessed by underground, road, rail and air – have made it easy to service clients around the UK and abroad.

A new logo, brochure and website were part of the decision to make sure that all parts of the company were reflecting the same forward-looking image. With an interactive planning feature on the website, and full news and information sections the company's online presence is intended to provide as much an information portal as an equipment catalogue.

Close observers will notice that the 'i' on the Renzacci is highlighted. This has been done specifically to stand for the importance of individuals within and connected to the company.



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“It sounds corny but it’s all very pertinent,” says Jason. “We do feel a responsibility for everyone connected with Renzacci. We are always evolving but there’s no point in making changes for changes’ sake – you can call us cautious! We’re always looking to the future but we don’t want to do things easy we want to do them right.”