

Ligare News

December 2007

Message from the Executive Chairman 2007 – a year of change

2007 has been a year of much positive change at Ligare. I believe it is a credit to the strength of our 28 years that we are now supported by our private equity partners, Knox Investment Partners (Knox), who have added capital and expertise in business development to help make Ligare even stronger. Knox support Ligare's culture of commitment to quality, service and the environment, so those aspects of our business will not change, and what will improve is our ability to reduce costs, improve efficiencies and add more services to our conventional and digital presses, and our bindery.

I welcome Cliff Brigstocke, our CEO, who joined us in July, and is a strong partner in helping us grow our business responsibly. Cliff has been invaluable in supporting me to quickly take our first steps in this new phase of growth. Grant Wastie, who has been with Ligare for 12 years, is now our COO, and Karen Morrison joined us in September as National Sales and Marketing Manager. I believe we have an excellent management team to help deliver the best possible quality and service to our valued customers with the support of Knox.

(www.knoxpartners.co.nz)

As part of our growth plan Ligare recently merged with Southwood Press which means that Ligare now has extra machinery (including a five colour A1 press), and more importantly, extra staff with considerable book expertise who have been welcomed with open arms into the Ligare family.

Océ BookFutures Conference

In June I was invited to represent Australia at the Océ BookFutures Conference in Germany which offered a platform for industry leaders to discuss the future direction of digital book printing. Offering significant advantages over traditional printing, especially for short run books and journals, digital printing is obviously the way of the future. Its ability to offer new business models to the book industry and realise the potential of long-tail titles can significantly save publishers' costs in warehousing and transportation alone as well as reducing risk on some new titles.



The Melbourne Cup

Ligare's traditional Melbourne Cup function was affected by the equine virus which as I am sure you know, has been a calamitous event for the racing industry. Whilst disappointed we could not hold our Randwick event, Ligare and a number of Melbourne based customers did make it to Flemington and everyone that attended had the usual 'heady' time with the city putting on a spectacular day.



With all these changes, and more to come, my commitment to our customers remains steadfast, so please contact me if you have any questions at all.

I couldn't finish without saying a big "Thankyou" for your support over the years, and I am looking forward to an even stronger and continuing relationship in the years to come.

Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year to all!

Richard Celarc

Ligare

Message from the CEO

Thank you for taking the time to read Ligare News. As Richard has commented, 2007 has been very exciting and we hope to share some of our developments and what they mean for you in this and subsequent newsletters.

I've had the pleasure of meeting a large number of our customers and suppliers since I joined Ligare six months ago, and have heard first hand what is important to you and what we can do to support your objectives.

For those I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting, I have taken the liberty of jotting down a little about me and more importantly what our key plans are for 2008 and beyond.

Most of my earlier years were in publishing where I had the privilege of working with some of the 'masters' including Bill Mackarell. ABP / Methuen gave me a good understanding of the 'rigors' of trade publishing and the importance of a good printing partner.

I then moved into the Thomson group, working at the Law Book Company for ten years. I held several positions with Thomson including operational roles and in the later years, as general manager for sales & marketing.

It was during my time at Thomson where I was lucky enough to meet Richard Celarc and the Ligare team (many remember me which is a slight worry). Richard quickly became Thomson's preferred printer through his exceptional customer service, quality and ability to listen and respond to any concerns. Something we still cherish as a core value at Ligare.

After ten years away, the lure of ink on paper called me back into the industry, albeit on the other side of the pen. I am now lucky enough to be working beside Richard and supporting him to grow the business in these very exciting times.

Vision for the Future

With Richard, and our senior team, we have developed what we believe to be a very strong Strategic Plan for the next five years.

The core elements of the plan revolve around doing more of what Ligare does well - short to medium run printing specialising in time sensitive information. Now that we have joined forces with Knox, we have the backing to increase our scale, both in terms of strategic management support and with resources.



For example, we have recently signed off another round of capital investment providing expanded capacity using the latest in digital print technology which is highlighted further in this newsletter.

We are also substantially upgrading our front end systems to make connectivity more efficient for our customers and key suppliers as well as driving efficiencies in productivity for Ligare. We are also finalising RF and bar code scanning to improve our production and warehouse/fulfilment flow and quality.

We will be able to bring this all under one roof in about 15 months when we re-locate to our purpose built factory. Those of you who have visited us would know that our growth has led to rather cramped conditions here.

So, the future will be more of what Ligare does well: an expanded team and capital to support Richard's vision for the future; and to be the leading one stop shop printer in short to medium, time sensitive printing.

Integration of Southwood Press

We are extremely pleased to have joined forces with Southwood Press six weeks ago. As in most acquisitions it is about the people, and the majority of the Southwood team joined us here at Ligare's premises in Riverwood. We have been impressed by the team who joined us, their professionalism and their tenacity for getting the job done.

Of course even with the best laid plans we inevitably encountered a few teething problems. The biggest was when

we commissioned the Southwood collator and binding line. When we pressed the 'on' button there was a bang – not an auspicious start! The mother board seemed to be the issue so this was replaced and again 'bang'. After much tracing and tracking, we found that prior to moving rats had made a home in the middle of the machine and had developed an appetite for red and green wires! Some delays were created as this stole a few weeks of vital production time which thankfully have now been recaptured. Needless to say at the end of this tale future due diligence will include rat checks!

On a more serious note, the integration has given us a much expanded capability to provide five colour work as well as a second integrated collating and binding line which gives us significant capacity to take on more work.

Thank you for your support as we integrated the two businesses.

Cliff Brigstocke

Sales & Marketing News

I can't believe it has only been three months since I joined Ligare as National Sales and Marketing Manager as I very quickly felt I was an integrated member of this large, friendly multi-cultural family. I have been on a very steep learning curve as I am new to the printing industry, however as an employee of the book industry for over twenty years I bring a book industry perspective to this exciting and challenging role at Ligare.

My experience includes various sales, marketing and management roles in several publishing companies as well as membership of an APA committee. I began my book industry career in bookshops and thus I bring to Ligare and its clients an understanding of the complete 'chain of the book' from beginning to end user including many of the issues involved.

The Expert and Friendly Sales Team

As Richard & Cliff have explained, it is indeed a very exciting and challenging time of growth at Ligare, but the sales team's commitment to our customers remains steadfast and we are all excited by the increased offerings we can bring to your needs. The Southwood sales team have joined the Ligare sales team which now means that we have a total of book industry experience and printing expertise of over two hundred years, which is the embodiment of 'expert'. Our team's commitment to quotation turn-around times of less than two days is supported by an improved estimation process.

The sales team is based in Sydney and comprises myself, David Edwards, Derek Hammond, Elizabeth Finniecome, Suzanne Madden, Bruce Welch, and Alex Donaldson is our Victorian Sales Manager. Naturally Richard Celarc and Cliff Brigstocke are also an integral part of our sales team.

Our New Website

Early 2008 will see the launch of our new website in which you will find in-depth information about our extended services. Its launch will be announced in the Weekly Book Newsletter.

My personal commitment to providing our customers with the best possible customer service will remain strong as Ligare grows, and I know I have the support of both the management and sales teams in this vision. Please feel free to contact me at any time with any questions or just to say hello.

The sales team join me in wishing you all a very happy and safe Christmas holiday.

Karen Morrison

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