

National TV coverage for local engineering firm

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BBC Breakfast crew with HepcoMotion staff

Tiverton-based linear motion expert HepcoMotion was pleased to appear on national TV on Wednesday – featuring on the hugely popular BBC1 Breakfast show. BBC Breakfast is a national British morning television news programme containing a mixture of breaking news, news, sport, weather, business and feature items. After a year of record investment in both machinery and people, Hepco was very proud to show its industry-leading facilities to the BBC's 6 million viewers.

BBC's Ben Thompson interviews Hepco's Barry Engstrom live for BBC1 Breakfast TV

As part of a wider discussion about the UK's productivity levels, the BBC visited Hepco's factory in Tiverton to interview Hepco's Manufacturing Director, Barry Engstrom. A world-leading manufacturer of linear motion products, Hepco produces guidance systems for machines and factories in a number of industries, including packaging, automotive, aerospace and even film and TV. Well known for its V-Guide technology, HepcoMotion pioneered the V Guide principle which addresses the problem of debris entering the sliding mechanisms in machinery.

BBC's Ben Thompson talking live on BBC Breakfast in HepcoMotion factory

BBC Business Reporter Ben Thompson interviewed Barry about the initiatives that are increasing productivity at HepcoMotion. In line with increased demand for its products, 2016 was a record year of investment for Hepco – with its highest level of spends in any one year on new machines and people. Machinery highlights include new CNC programming software to reduce cycle times and the introduction of three high-tech robots to automate processes. By automating some of its manual and repetitive tasks, Hepco has been able to up-skill and re-train workers to focus on higher value, more rewarding work.

Says Barry Engstrom, Hepco's Manufacturing Director; "The introduction of robots into our factory processes has enabled us to up-skill our employees from machine-minders into machine programmers and add more value than before. We sent them on training courses to learn the new skills and they have come back to a more interesting and challenging role. This benefits both the individual and the company as a whole, helping us to increase productivity".

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HepcoMotion also saw additional headcount arrive in 2016, and a move to a 24/7 working pattern in the factory. At the same time by introducing new methods, new technology and better ways of doing things we were also able to increase productivity significantly to help support demand. Barry continues; "Last year was a notable year for us in terms of customer demand, levels of investment and the introduction of new technology. We're committed to producing innovative products, and are

delighted that the BBC1's national news team has come to our headquarters in Tiverton to showcase our increased productivity".

The BBC was also keen to hear about Hepco's award-winning apprenticeship programme that is bridging the skills gap and recruiting new talent into the engineering industry. Offering a well-renowned apprenticeship scheme, Hepco has a strong history working with apprentices as many of the managers and even the chairman himself, started work at HepcoMotion as apprentices. Indeed, nearly 50% of Hepco's engineering production staff are either apprentices or former apprentices.

Barry was joined by an employment law consultant who advises firms on upping productivity and an economist from the University of West England.

Hepco's Barry was interviewed 3 times during the news show, with headlines showcasing HepcoMotion each hour, resulting in a total of 12 minutes of national broadcast TV.

Barry with BBC's cameraman, presenter and producer