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Queen's Award winners

Winning a Queen's Award for Enterprise is more than just a pat on the back, it acts as a prestigious endorsement of the quality of the business, writes Helen Blow

SINCE winning a Royal accolade for their business, two Tewkesbury companies are reaping the benefits.

L-3 Communications TRL Technology and Group 4 Technology (G4Tec) were awarded Queen's Awards for Enterprise in April in the international trade category.

Not only is it a major slap on the back for both companies, it is also confirmation that, in an increasingly tough business world, these two local firms are growing and reporting exceptional profits, despite difficult market conditions.

Winning an award gives companies the chance to show customers and suppliers just how successful they are, and acts as an independent and prestigious endorsement of the quality of the business.

It is the second time G4Tec has won a Queen's Award, both times for increasing exports by almost 50 per cent over three years to a total of £60 million.

Chairman and CEO Keith Whitelock said: "Despite incredibly tough market conditions, G4Tec have successfully grown our export business by over 50% in the last three years.

"We were eager to gain recognition of this exceptional achievement and therefore entered the Queen's Award as it is widely acknowledged as being the most prestigious award for business performance.

"When we heard that we had been awarded the award, there was a real sense of pride and this feeling remains prevalent across all areas of the business," he said.

"The award is a result of the contribution and commitment of the staff in Tewkesbury and we are now looking forward to the visit by the



WINNERS: above are staff from L-3 TRL Technology, Tewkesbury, which has won the Queen's Award for Enterprise. Left to right, Jon Hooper (engineer), Orville Wade (engineer), James Perkins (engineer), Andy Pine (head of Strategy and Sales), Peter McKee (CEO), Andrew Barnes (head of Manufacturing), Sandra Hamon (head of HR), Dave Watson (head of Support) and Mark Hutchings (CFO)

Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire in July where the award will be officially presented."

The company, based at International Drive, Tewkesbury, employs 384 staff and supplies access control, intrusion and video security products.

It started trading in 1989 and while most of its markets are in North America and Europe, it also boasts good sales in the Middle East, Latin America and Asia.

L-3 TRL, based at Shannon Way, Tewkesbury, won the Queen's Award for quadrupling its export sales over three years, with the overseas market now accounting for 70 per cent of production.

This was achieved by developing the products and equipment needed by the coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Chief executive Peter McKee said: "TRL began 25 years ago as a UK R&D company; its recent growth over the last five years can be mainly attributed to its success in developing products suitable for export to the rest of the world.

"Being a British company that designs and manufactures all of its products in the UK is important to our customers.

"The Queen's Award recognises the great work and contribution that the entire team has made in getting the international products to market."

Employing 350 people, including almost 100 new jobs created during that time, L-3 TRL have sold to more than 30 countries and exports totalling more than £44 million have been achieved.



WINNER: MD Keith Whitelock at G4 Technology's HQ in Tewkesbury

Recent winners

- Renishaw, Wotton-under-Edge
- Smiths Aerospace (now GE Aviation), Bishop's Cleeve
- Forest Press Hydraulics, Cinderford
- Heber Limited, Stroud
- Trackwise Designs, Tewkesbury
- AGD Systems, Staverton
- Avon Metals, Gloucester
- Alan Dick and Co. Cheltenham
- Ultra Electronics, Staverton
- Hold Fast Level Crossings, Chedworth
- Formpave, Coleford
- Stoneridge Pollak, Cheltenham
- Messier-Dowty
- Ecotricity

If you want to be in for a chance winning a Queen's Award for your business next year, now is the time to apply.

The Queen's Awards are aimed at rewarding outstanding UK businesses and are recognised as the country's most prestigious awards for business performance.

The awards are presented in three categories: international trade, innovation and sustainable development, and are open to all business units

that meet the entry criteria.

Winning an award is an opportunity to prove to customers and suppliers just how successful the business is, acting as an independent and prestigious endorsement of the quality of the company.

The categories:

- International trade recognises companies that have demonstrated growth in overseas earnings.

- Innovation recognises companies that have demonstrated commercial success through innovative products or services.

- Sustainable development recognises companies that have integrated environmental, social, economic and management aspects of sustainable development into their business.

To apply for next year's awards log on to www.queensawards.org.uk.

How you win a Queen's Award . . .