
Hansans roll out innovative product to combat Covid-19

Cork company MTD Precision Engineering adapted to circumstances arising from the Covid-19 pandemic to produce roll-on hand sanitiser bottles.

A few short months ago, no-one realised what an important commodity hand sanitiser would be. But not long after the global pandemic took hold, Sean Hayes of MTD Precision Engineering realised that there was a shortage of push pump bottles to hold the sought-after liquid and focused his attention on creating a different receptacle.

Having availed of the Trading Online Voucher from Local Enterprise Office South Cork, the engineer developed a website and ecommerce platform to market the world's first roll-on hand sanitiser.

With an alcohol content of 70 per cent, Hansans is antiviral and antibacterial, helping to prevent the risk of infection – and due to its anti-spill design, is perfect for carrying around in handbags, briefcases, or schoolbags.

“Due to the nature of our business serving the biopharma sector, we were aware of the practices which were required to deal with the onset of Covid-19 so we adapted quickly and were able to get on with our work,” said Hayes.

“I split the workforce into teams of two and implemented a rota system spreading staff across seven days each week. Our teams are agile, and we already had good team communication practices in place and experience of remote working, so when we pivoted towards making hand sanitiser, we had no issues with social distancing or implementing new GMP work practices.

“Then we were asked to get involved with supporting supplies for the health sector and it was during this time that we realised there was a shortage of 100ml pumps for hand sanitiser.”



The Cork based engineer began looking at other potential means of dispensing the antibacterial gel and pondered at the possibility of putting it into a container used for roll-on deodorant.

“I took apart a bottle to see if it would work for hand sanitiser, but it didn’t dispense properly so I approached a company who manufacture the roller deodorant ball fitting and asked if they wanted to get involved. And after some adjustments, together we came up with a design which would work for the gel.

“So here at MTD, we renovated some office space to make a clean production site and got to work straight away by organising a project team internally who focused on the design of the product, the graphics and the filling line.

“Then after just seven weeks of working from 6am until midnight, Hansans was ready for market.”

In record time, the product was taken from concept to production. To date, more than 20,000 units have been sold to the retail sector and it is now ready to be launched across the country. Hayes added that although it’s early days, he is glad he took the challenge and would encourage other companies to try and find ways in which they can pivot during these extraordinary times.

“We all worked very hard and are delighted with the finished product. It is still in the early stages

but so far we have shipped out to pharmacies, DIY stores, office supply, and various shops as well as donating some to the Gardai and local health centres and it has been very well received by all.

“There is no doubt that times are difficult for everyone at the moment, but I would encourage businesses to try and be positive, look at their strengths and believe in their own team. We shouldn’t be afraid to ask for assistance and should trust our instincts – so if things don’t work out at first, we must not give up because at least we will have made an effort and, if necessary, can go back to the drawing board and try again.”

Pictured at launch (l-r) Liam Quaid, Eileen Hayes, Diarmuid Ryan, Cllr Dr John Sheehan (Lord Mayor of Cork), Seán Hayes and Noel Bracken.

Published: 24 July, 2020