

# Supporting the Construction Market

Datum Survey Products Ltd was formed in 1984 in Ossett, England by Paul Finney and Tim Long with the intention of creating a more affordable route into the construction survey market. Datum Survey Products began by taking the best of existing products manufactured in China and redesigning these to a higher specification, predominantly to meet UK construction market requirements.

Twenty-four years on, Datum still manufactures its products in China, working closely with factories to ensure that high specification and quality remains constant. Our relationship with the factories is key, and regular visits to China guarantee incorporation of the latest innovations and ideas from an early stage in product design. Our marketplace has now expanded considerably and we supply survey products via distribution partners throughout Europe and into Russia and the USA, as well as satisfying the demands of the busy UK construction market.

## Instrumentation

Our range of survey products includes not only instrumentation; all complementary accessories are also available from us. Automatic levels have been a huge sales success. They are now offered with a lifetime guarantee on parts, testimony to the production standards achieved by the factories with which we work in partnership. The laser product range has also expanded in recent years to incorporate the full spectrum of construction lasers, from small, compact fixed-beam and cross-line models to fully automatic dual-grade instrumentation. The popular DUO laser instrument is available in four variants and includes the latest technology Green Beam version and a high-accuracy, 100m-range pulse-plumb beam model. Again, high-specification quality construction standards mean that these are offered with five-year warranty. The range includes laser accessories such as detectors and machine-control receivers, level accessories including change plates and levelling staffs, and a full range of tripods, poles and prism systems.

## Backup Service

We supply our distribution network with technical service training along with calibration facilities. This ensures support of products by a backup service offered by a network of trained technicians and sales staff to assist customers. The bulk of products are distributed through trade and reseller outlets. In the UK we supply large trade building merchants and similar trade outlets with products that are attractively priced and of high quality, and we encourage our distribution outlets in other countries to operate similarly. Our distribution network is trained by our own trade-sales team, which works actively with the people selling the products to the end user so that they feel comfortable demonstrating products as well as offering technical help and service. We actively train our distribution outlets in servicing the equipment, thus providing a refreshing change in today's disposable society; our equipment can be stripped, repaired and serviced to return it to the original specification. Our general policy of sole distribution for our outlets in countries other than the UK makes investment in training and support beneficial to both supplier and customer.

## Market Changes

Over the last few years there has been a distinct shift away from optical levels in certain markets, as users embrace laser-level technology and the benefits of either one-man or multiple-person measurement employing one laser and multiple detectors. The advantage has become obvious in countries such as Ireland, where we have seen an almost 90% transfer in sales from optical to laser levels over the last five years. The general UK market now seems to be adopting this trend, especially now laser pricing is more accessible to the entry-level user.

## 21st Century

Datum's expansion into the twenty-first century will continue by ever expanding the product-lines and distribution networks. New instruments coming through in the near future, such as the new pipe laser and DPL4 multi-beam laser will strengthen the product range further, while we will strive to maintain the high quality and competitive pricing upon which our reputation is built. With more and more products becoming available from the Asian markets and some questions hanging over the mass-produced quality on offer, we expect our customer-base and brand name to grow further. Customers will continue to put their faith in the high standards we set, and choose products that can be shown to be dependable and serviceable throughout their working life.

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