

# Secure future for progressive firm

FOR Roy Williams, relocating business premises is like the proverbial bus-waiting story, with nothing for an age, then suddenly two appear.

To be accurate, Crosby Intruder Alarms (CIA) hasn't yet left the site it only moved to in winter 2004, but the fact that Roy and his business partner wife Ann are already considering it speaks volumes for recent progress.

Especially as Roy and Ann's home, where CIA was founded in 1984, remained its HQ for 20 years.

But there's no suggesting this field-leading business found its first decades tough going.

Far from it, for not only did CIA develop a peer-leading platform from which it easily adapted to become among the very first to boast installation capabilities compliant with strict new European standards, but with Roy at the helm, it's been steered by a genuine industry expert, witnessed by his status as a renowned trade lecturer.

"We stayed home for so long," explained Roy, "because I don't believe in running before walking. The reason for finally moving was more about space than anything, because mainly we're an outbound business anyway, as we visit clients more so than the other way around."

"Although, since moving, it's been non-stop and, yes, we already sense we'll have to move again soon."

Recent progress has been particularly marked on the electrical side of CIA's fortunes, thanks to the 50% stake it now owns in Crosby Electrical Services (CES) following a transaction that formed part of the 2004 relocation.

"When we moved in we also had an option on part-ownership of CES, which was already trading on site, so we took it," said Roy. "It made sense, as there was so much cross-trade anyway, so now both businesses share premises, on upper and lower floors, and although they're distinct, they're linked in terms of livery on the vans, letterheads and so on."

"When we moved in there were five alarm engineers and now there are six, whereas there were five electrical engineers and now there are 16, so that shows the progress; and we also ensure all are fully qualified to City & Guilds standard."

Supported by The Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) not only in acquiring the Endbutt Lane premises but also the stakeholding in CES, Roy says he appreciates the ongoing "wish list" relationship with the bank and the tailored approach of business manager Sue McNally.

He said: "Like with our moves in 2004, Sue knows our 'wish list' and it's good to know that when we think it's time to press ahead the bank will be on-hand with advice."

That may come sooner rather than later, as the company – although



Crosby Intruder Alarms owners Roy and Ann Williams

enjoying solid word-of-mouth local trade, with very little marketing other than a comprehensive website and vehicle livery – has just fulfilled the first stage of a contract to supply Denbigh County Council schools with CCTV equipment. And thanks to industry-standard installation capabilities, it's also just equipped a Midlands business with a product called Smoke Cloak, the ultimate in current intruder deterrents.

"Their shop was ram-raided," said

Roy, "so we fitted Smoke Cloak which, when triggered, basically floods an 80x50ft area with an impenetrable fog."

"Those lines of business are really taking off and, as well as working in, say, North Wales or the Midlands, we've also secured a contract with an American company with a base in Ireland. But we've also worked as far apart as Perth to Bristol, so while we're still local, we operate nationally too."

Originally a TV engineer, Roy, a firm believer in sending engineers on manufacturers' courses, is also an approved security industry (SITO) assessor of trade professionals throughout the North West.

Added to the fact he's also a City & Guilds (C&G) teacher covering several trade aspects, and has been asked to co-write a new C&G course on security alarm installation, few can see industry developments as clearly as him.