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## **OLYMPICS FLOOR COMPANY TARGETS OVERSEAS MARKET WITH HSBC SUPPORT**

A company that produced the flooring for the London 2012 Olympics' opening ceremony is taking the process it developed specifically for the Games overseas, with the support of HSBC Commercial Bank.

Huntingdon-based Le Mark Group converted the design for the 'reveal' floor featured in the Pandemonium section of the ceremony into a printable format, produced the floor and installed it. It is the largest printed stage floor ever produced, covering over 7,500 square metres and consisting of over 800 separate pieces. The company developed a new floor custom printing technique to meet the organiser's requirements and believes it can now successfully export the process overseas, particularly to the US market.

Le Mark is targeting stadiums and exhibition companies in the States and recently attended a major trade exhibition, the LDI Show in Las Vegas, to showcase the product to US businesses. It is also planning to speak to the organisers of the 2014 World Cup in Brazil and Winter Olympics in Russia to discuss how the flooring could be used in their opening ceremonies. The company has formed a new division, Performance Floors LLP, to market the specialist floors to the overseas market.

The company has been an HSBC customer for over five years and the bank's Mid-Lincolnshire and the Fens Commercial Centre has put in place trade finance facilities to support Le Mark's growth overseas. The relationship is led by HSBC's Senior International Commercial Manager Spencer Harnwell.

Le Mark was founded by current Managing Director Stuart Gibbons and Linda Gibbons, Sales Director, in 1982 and specialises in producing self-adhesive tapes, printed-label tapes and dance and stage floors. It employs 50 people at its premises in Huntingdon.

Managing Director Stuart Gibbons said: “We believe there is huge potential for this product, which allows a customer to give us a design which we can then convert into a custom-made printed floor on a vast scale. We are in discussion with a potential American partner whose client portfolio includes Ford and Chevrolet, as well as stadium owners, exhibition firms and the organisers of events such as Brazil 2014.

“The Olympics was a massive showcase for our company, watched by billions of people worldwide. Our floor was used in one of the most prominent sections of the show when the greenery was removed, so it garnered a lot of attention. This gives us the potential to transform the business and significantly grow turnover; it is highly specialised and we developed a process specifically for this size of floor.”

Dave Welch, HSBC Area Commercial Director for Mid-Lincolnshire and the Fens, said: “This company is already very successful but this new arm could propel its growth and push it into a new market. We have a long-standing relationship with Stuart and Le Mark and have been pleased to support this next stage of its development with specific trade finance facilities.”

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