

Australian Automotive Component Supplier

Backwell IXL

Example of diversification into new non auto business area, using the skills and capabilities that underpin the capability being a Tier 1 supplier to the OEMs.

Example of using the rigorous automotive skills to develop and expand the non auto parts of the organisation.

Backwell IXL was established in 1858 and has remained in the Backwell family for 155 years. BIXL would be one of the oldest privately owned (and in the one family) manufacturing companies in Australia and is a diversified business located in Geelong.

The company manufactures automotive components in metal stampings, finishing, roll forming and assembly for all three OEMs. As well as automotive components, the business designs and manufactures heating consumer goods for the bathrooms, namely the iconic "IXL Tastic" as well as the new innovative "Neo Tastic" and range of Cannon Gas space heaters. The third arm to the business is a ferrous foundry, supplying castings to the resource industry and as a Tier 2 supplier through its customers to the global market.

Business Diversification

With support from ASEA, Backwell IXL continued a business development and diversification strategy into new markets. This was underpinned by the disciplines required to supply the automotive component market which ensures that all customers enjoy the supply of low cost, quality assured products through their supply chains.

<http://www.ixlmanufacturing.com.au/>

Recently, the IXL Group has secured a high volume contract to manufacturing solar panel framing system and components for utility scale regional solar farms.

<http://finance.yahoo.com/news/first-solar-awards-major-supply-221100598.html>

Engineering Manager Ross McDonald attributes the success in this new business venture to "the very stringent automotive manufacturing principles that underpin our competitive capabilities for all products that require durability."

Applying Automotive Rigour to the Non Auto Areas of the Organisation.

IXL Metal Castings is part of the IXL Group and supplies castings to an Australian customer base which is predominately global resource businesses.

<http://www.ixlfoundry.com.au>

In a manufacturing sector that has severely contracted, the IXL foundry has thrived and expanded in business volume and profitability, against a background of foundry closures. In the last 15 years, in Victoria 17 foundries have closed, now leaving just 9 operating.

This success is underpinned by adopting world's best practice in Lean and Customer Relations, into a small operating unit of originally 12 and now 25 employees. Business volume has trebled and the company has invested in capital to support this growth, this now successfully pitting IXL against imports. Indeed there are examples of "on-shoring" and many examples of customers supporting Australian manufacturers, driven by economic benefit.

The flow of the automotive component supplier disciplines has been assisted by the ASEA programs across the three business units.