

BDS was originally formed in Dec 1993 by Kevin Blyde

This is his story...

It all started following eleven years in the industry beginning in 1982 as a trainee Fire Alarm engineer with FACE Alarms, a serviced based company in Lavender Hill Battersea London. I remember my old Boss David Cochrane always putting me on the spot and asking me

“Who is King?”

I would always reply **“The Customer David!”** This I have never forgotten...

Following 8 years of service I was approached by the newly formed Britannia Fire which was an amalgamation of Nat Alarms in the south and Cowie Fire in the north to become a National Fire Alarm service supervisor. I believe this had come about because of my onsite relationship with Gatwick Airport which I had looked after for 4 years and had recently been won by Britannia Fire I was just 23 I met with some fantastic engineers and even managed a two week training course in Boston with Simplex.

Britannia was taken over by Wormald in 1990 and a little later on I decided to go and work for a small privately owned fire suppression company called HYGGOOD based in Guildford - this was a great firm that shared all its achievements & success, including any highs and lows with everyone that worked there and you really felt you were part of something.

After two years I started to get itchy feet I had a young family and was the only bread winner this was now 1993 and the mortgage interest rates had shot up to 15% and no matter how successful HYGGOOD were doing you could only earn so much, so I decided to take the plunge...

I firstly took three months' work with Route 1 on a fixed Salary but knew I had to do something on my own so started what was then called Building Detection Services (BDS)

This was achieved by using the last of my Credit card limit of £2K and a £5K loan. This enabled me to buy a car which was a 10 year old Belmont Astra and pay the now crippling £1,500 a month Mortgage and get me by for two months

I still have my first months invoice records and was very proud to have invoiced £6K which was mostly for labour, however waiting 60 days to get paid was tough but we got through.



By 1999 I had my Brother Mitchell and Brother in law Andy working with me. We had started to hit £1M turnover so decided to go Ltd and take BDS to the next level. My background as an engineer, supervisor, salesman and now owner enabled me to seek out and employ quality engineers such as Tony Watts (a fellow trainee at FACE & now our Projects Director).

Managers including my Dad Kevin Blyde Snr (now retired and fishing most weeks) were on board to give close support and advice meaning that we were able to discuss our tactics and decision making, sometimes making the odd mistake, but the company started to grow win major Contracts such as the FCO, Palace of Westminster, Fords and Kings place, this also included the NIA in Birmingham which enabled us to open BDS Northern headed up by our very own Graham Hawkins.

The early 2,000's also saw BDS become a systems integrator with Honeywell supplying and supporting their three main brands Gent, Notifier & Morley and are proud to continue this relationship today

The success of BDS continued until 2010 when I was approached by a representative from ID Support Holdings we were on their radar as they were looking for an independent fire alarm company with a foothold in the south and a diverse customer base with regular repetitive revenue streams

The acquisition appealed to me as ID had no fire division so we were bringing something to the table and they operated in the retail sector, the deal meant I was to remain with the company firstly as the MD for Fire, and after my two year earn out period as a fire and life safety commercial director therefore being able to keep my client relationships.

The three years spent with ID were a whirlwind it was very clear ID's acquisition of BDS was to support its dwindling retail sector market as we were now in the middle of our worst recession in twenty years. BDS just before merging managed to get on the Buying Solutions framework agreement and with that came successful bids within the health sector. As the Fire division grew from a £5Million business to over £8Million business The Group were starting to struggle elsewhere in its other sectors which were HVAC and Integrated Security

The things I was taught all those years ago about Customer being King seemed to fade into a computer says NO nationally operated mentality and unfortunately on August 2nd 2013 ID Group with all its service divisions went into receivership.

On the 5th of August 2013 after a long weekend discussing our options with my Brother Mitchell and my wife Mandy we decided to resurrect BDS now standing for Bespoke Detection Services a name I believe suits us and all of the many years experience our senior management team have.

We incorporated our business the following day and remain in the same offices. The best thing is all the old BDS team remain, so many have worked with me for many years we celebrated our first Christmas and achieving our BAFE Gold Standard with a good old fashioned pub gathering that old feel good factor is back again and am so grateful to my staff and mostly our loyal customers

The one thing is for sure we all know who is KING - Our loyal Customers!

