



March 2013

TRADESMEN BATTLE THROUGH BAD WEATHER

As 2012 is named the second wettest year on record and February 2013 the coldest for 26 years*, leading supplier to the trade, Screwfix, reveals that just 10% of tradesmen resort to cancelling jobs due to weather conditions**.

Indeed, the majority (55%) state they continue to work through any bad weather that comes their way, with a further 22% instead working a reduced schedule**.

Whether the forecasters predict floods, rain, snow or fog, most tradesmen carry on regardless, investing in appropriate clothing (31%) or stocking up essential products and tools (17%)** to remain safe and comfortable while working.

In particular, sales of snow shovels at Screwfix rocketed in January 2013, with a 505% rise week on week when the snow hit*** as tradesmen cleared driveways to get on their way. Thermal workwear was similarly popular, with base-layer thermal wear seeing an uplift of 30%*** week on week in January as tradesmen battled against the elements.

A key trend identified in the research by Screwfix was of tradesmen working smarter during periods of extreme weather. Instead of reducing their workload, many instead choose to prioritise indoor jobs, work closer to home or build in extra time when planning their journeys to take into account any road disruptions.

Staying in contact with customers, colleagues and suppliers is a key priority all year round, and even more so during bad weather. Tradesmen are embracing technology to help them do this, with three quarters owning a smart phone**. In addition, research from Screwfix shows that tradesmen are using smart phones and tablets to purchase supplies for their business, with 98% planning to buy the same amount or more via these digital platforms in 2013**.

John Mewett, marketing director at Screwfix, comments: “For many self-employed tradesmen, taking a day off due to weather just isn’t an option. For most it means a loss of earnings and letting down valuable and loyal customers.

“To make sure our customers stay safe at all times, we are committed to making essential products, tools and workwear easily available to the tradesmen of Britain. We offer a quick and easy way for customers to purchase products at a time and place to fit in with their busy schedules. By simply selecting items from the catalogue, or online using Screwfix’s Click & Collect service, tradesmen can check if the products they require are in stock and then just collect them from the store five minutes later.

“We are also committed to extending our network of stores across the UK, all of which are open seven days a week. We have already opened 20 new stores in 2013, bringing our total to more than 270, giving tradesmen even better access to the tools and services they require.”

For more information on Screwfix’s new range of products, visit www.screwfix.com, call 0500 41 41 41 or pick up a copy of the new catalogue at your local Screwfix store or order it online.

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Note to editors

* According to the MET Office <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/news/releases/archive/2013>

** According to insight research completed by Screwfix in January 2013

*** Based on retail statistics from Screwfix – week on week stats based w/c Sunday 13th January 2013 compared to the previous week, w/c Sunday 6th January 2013. Year on year stats are based on the same period in 2012.

About Screwfix:

Screwfix is recognised as being “where the trade buys” offering a straightforward and transparently-priced retail experience that enables busy tradesmen to shop 14,000 products over the phone, online, via their mobile or from their local store.

- From power tools and workwear to cables and pipe fittings, more than 11,000 products are available to collect from the national network of over 260 stores. An extra range of over 3,000 products can be ordered over the phone, online or from a local store for next day delivery, with orders taken up until 7pm to home or site.

- screwfix.com attracts 1 million visitors per week and the Screwfix *Click & Collect* service means customers can conveniently purchase supplies online and then collect from store just five minutes later.
- Customers can contact the UK-based Screwfix call centre free 7 days a week (plus bank holidays) on 0500 41 41 41, or on the mobile-friendly 01935 414141.
- Screwfix stores are open 7 days a week – see screwfix.com for local opening hours
- 94 per cent of customers would recommend a friend to Screwfix.

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