



Bidvest hosted an investor day on Tuesday , November 24 2009. In the interests of the equitable dissemination of information to all parties, a summary of the more significant issues raised in discussion are summarized below.

**General points addressed by Bidvest CE, Brian Joffe:**

The economies of Europe and Asia Pacific in which the Group operates are stable however South Africa is weaker.

Trading conditions remain reasonably tough, however they are expected to improve in the coming months leading up to the Soccer World Cup and beyond.

Most of the divisions have, during the quarter to September 2009, achieved better profit and asset management than the corresponding period in the prior year. The quality of trading earnings should improve towards the end of the current financial year.

Automotive sector appears to have leveled out, used vehicle volumes and margins have improved. Financing approvals for vehicle purchases by banks is still low but showing signs of improving.

The Bid Industrial and Commercial division is under performing due significant price deflation in some of their core products.

The Asian Pacific businesses are all performing well.

The reorganization and restructuring undertaken in 3663 in the UK has reflected positively in the first quarter of F2010.. The average Rand translation vs Sterling appreciated by 17% for the 1st 4 months of F2010 impacting the Rand earnings of the UK businesses negatively.

Interest rate cuts in SA have had a positive effect on the financing costs of the Group.

Ontime Automotive (distributor of prestige automotive vehicles in the United Kingdom) is breaking even and generated a small profit in October 2009

Bidvest Namibia continues to perform well, particularly the fishing operations. The listing on the Namibian Stock Exchange was successfully concluded on October 26 2009.

Cost base is being aggressively tackled by management where volumes are declining.

The Nowaco and Farutex acquisition has been in line with our expectations. Management have settled in well.

Acquisitive opportunities continue to present themselves however patience is required and valuations need to meet adequate returns benchmarks.

### **Bidfreight**

- For the first four months of F2010, container and airfreight volumes have remained lower than our expectations, with imports down substantially. This has negatively affected Safcor Panalpina and SACD. An unfavourable exchange rate, lower interest rates, reluctance by customers to pay timeously for their disbursements and pressure on prices have resulted in a poor performance from Safcor Panalpina
- The bulk and break-bulk volumes have been good. This includes petroleum in Island View Storage, manganese in Bulk Connections and steel in Bidfreight Port Operations. Export volumes in commodities generally have improved.
- Going forward to December 2009, volumes are starting to come back, particularly imports from the east.
- The World Cup will create additional activity in the country which will have a positive "spin off" on volumes for our facilities and we expect a good second half of the year.
- Our two major expansion projects which total R400 million are on track. The warehouse in Cape Town will be ready in December and the tanks in Richards Bay will be ready in March 2010.

### **Bidserv**

- Bidserv have experienced tough trading conditions in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of F2010.

- Early signs of recovery have been noted in certain businesses in September and October 2009.
- Bidserv's services businesses have remained resilient due to the annuity nature of their models.
- Bidserv Banking division has performed below expectation but should improve as 2010 World Cup approaches.
- Hospitality and Travel related businesses continue to suffer from declines in hotel occupancies and air travel.
- FIFA 2010 World Cup will directly benefit our Travel, Cleaning and Floral Design businesses with secondary effects also likely to be felt in many other areas ie Laundries.
- Three small acquisitions will be completed in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter F2010 involving:
  - Vehicle tracking
  - Toilet Hire
  - Water coolers

## **Foodservice Products**

### **BIDVEST EUROPE**

#### **UNITED KINGDOM**

- The economy is stable but still in recession; GDP declined by 0,4% in the quarter; hospitality sector down 1,0% in the quarter.
- Customer volumes approximately 5% down.
- Gross margin under pressure from customer down trading
- Excellent cost control; benefits of internal reorganisation undertaken in F2009 reflecting in trading results.
- New depot opened at Paddock Wood on budget and on time replacing two other depots

#### **NETHERLANDS**

- Economy much tougher but the business is responding well
- No inflation being experienced, possibility of deflation being monitored
- A few small bolt on acquisitions have been concluded

- Catering volumes are weaker, institutional sector is competitive and the hospitality sector depressed.
- Profit maintained through efficiency, cost control and purchasing improvements.
- Opportunities for consolidation will be pursued into the future.

### **BELGIUM**

- Overall business holding up well, solid result in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter versus F2009
- Economic crisis had limited impact as the business has relatively low exposure to hospitality sector.
- New business platform in the northern part of Belgium (Flanders) is improving.

### **MIDDLE EAST**

- Fragile recovery in Dubai economy holding up. Dubai had a tough first quarter, trading has improved in October.
- Improved cash generation, debtors collections and inventory stocking.
- Saudi operation has delivered in line with expectations in 1<sup>st</sup> 6 months

### **NOWACO (CZECH REPUBLIC AND SLOVAKIA)**

- Strong distribution offering for independent retail and foodservice market
- Trading performance in line with due diligence expectation but above budget
- Management settling down well to the “Bidvest” way
- Opportunities for inter divisional synergies and cooperation being explored

### **FARUTEX (POLAND)**

- Market leaders in foodservice with good infrastructural footprint
- Trading performance in line with due diligence expectation
- Management settling down well to the “Bidvest” way
- New depot in Lodz (the 11<sup>th</sup>) opened in November
- Opportunities for growth and consolidation in a massive market

### **ASIA PACIFIC:**

## **AUSTRALIA**

- The economy largely shielded from the worst of the global downturn due to trade with China and has bounced back.
- The business is doing well, there is small volume growth and good efficiency gains have been achieved.
- Strong expense control, EBIT reflects solid growth.

## **NEW ZEALAND**

- Prolonged recession but consumers appear to be spending again
- Market share increases, positive sales growth on flat volumes with limited inflation
- Good performance, EBIT reflects growth.

## **SINGAPORE**

- Economic activity has improved significantly but not as buoyant as Hong Kong / China
- Business performing well under the circumstances
- Signs of mild deflation emerging but management not concerned
- Malaysia greenfields business performing to expectation.

## **HONG KONG / CHINA**

- The economies of China & Hong Kong have rebounded strongly
- Trading has improved after the downturn
- Opportunities for longer term market consolidation.
- Good volume growth enabling the business to perform well.

## **SOUTH AFRICA:**

### **CATERPLUS**

- The majority of foodservice establishments continue to experience fewer feet and a reduction in spend per head in their establishments.
- Restaurant market continues to be badly affected by the economic crisis, business failures are getting worse and we have yet to see the bottom.
  - Negative volumes growth being recorded as we manage credit more stringently
  - Bad debts in this category increasing and our biggest business risk

- More beds becoming available as new hotels continue to open. The lead up to 2010 is benefiting us as we have been successful with a number of hotels catering equipment orders.
- Industrial caterers continue to experience negative volume growth as fewer feet and lower spend per head is the order of the day.
- Our focus remains:
  - To reduce our debtors and pull in our book.
  - To leverage off the largest basket in the industry by selling a larger basket into each customer that can pay.
  - Quality of customers will continue to be emphasised.
- Trading since July has been weak and getting worse. We are hopeful that we will have a better festive season and the market will start to pick up in anticipation of the World Cup.

- **BIDFOOD INGREDIENTS**

- The Division's trading profit for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter has been satisfactory.
- N.C.P. Yeast trading performances has been most pleasing mostly attributed to the pricing and supply of molasses which normalized during the period.
- Chipkins Bakery profit was very satisfactory as margins and costs have been very well managed.
- Crown Food's profit declined as trading has been extremely tough. Sales volumes of commodities have declined as a result of certain major customer's decline in business, price resistance and financial constraints.
- Bidfood Solutions division's profits were slightly below budget but prospects are promising.
- The Division is continuing to pursue new opportunities in an extremely tough trading environment with the introduction of new innovative products and concepts.

**SPECIALITY**

- Trading conditions remain challenging.
  - Consumers still trading down for cheaper products.

- Volatility of the Rand and commodity price movements make for a challenging trading environment
- Currently deflation having a 7% impact on the business.
- Gross margins have been well managed, stocks and debtors are well controlled.
- Outlook for the next quarter is more positive.
- Ambitious plans to grow own Goldcrest brand presence in the market.

### **Bidpaper Plus**

- Market demand for General Print has remained slow and demand for Stationery has dropped dramatically especially in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter F2009 and 1<sup>st</sup> quarter F2010
- Production facility capacities have been rationalized in line with reduced demand; material input costs have stabilized allowing margins to be better managed
- Communication and mail products have been influenced by a cautious approach by retailers.
- Ad hoc major export project work has benefited the divisions over the past six months and remains a strong focus area going forward
- Electronic solutions continue to gain market support allowing the e-mail business to grow strongly
- The overall trend is for customers to “buy down” as they look to cut expenses, this results in a greater reduction in demand for premium brands

### **Bid Industrial & Commercial Products**

- Poor results achieved for the 1st quarter. The comparative period results reflect the tail end of the boom prior to the recession that commenced October/November 2008. Conditional on the non recurrence of a second wave of economic recession the shortfall in the first 6 months should be recouped by the end of F2010.

- The rise in metals prices including copper and steel and further fuelled by the weaker Rand can only benefit in an environment in which there are willing buyers, sellers or speculators The recently created “Voltex Solutions” division, a business over and above traditional wholesaling, provides added value to customers by advising on energy efficient solutions.
- Problems related to implementation of certain new ERP systems no longer exist. Voltex will begin their ERP testing process in March 2010
- Asset management and expense control continue to improve.
- The Furniture Division has not shown improvement although there is customer interest which is anticipated to result in significant orders within the second half of F2010.
- The Stationery Division performed poorly in the first quarter but an improvement is expected through the remainder of F2010.
- Catering supplies and packaging, although down, performed at satisfactory levels.

### **BidAuto**

- McCarthy has been restructured with Fleet Services being aligned with Bidvest Bank, Yamaha Distributors and Heavy Equipment forming a new Bid Imports Division.
- Current trading environment:
  - October new vehicle sales provide further evidence that the sharply negative trend has been arrested and that the market is in the process of bottoming out.

- Sales during October showed only a marginal 0.5% improvement over sales recorded in September. The total vehicle sales of 36 082 units also showed a 12.5% decline on sales recorded in October 2008. Sales of commercial vehicles remain depressed. The 24 592 passenger vehicles sold during October were again underpinned by purchases from car rental companies
  
- Two additional factors had a positive influence on car sales in October:
  - The credit application approval rate improved slightly.
  - More attractive trade-in prices being offered due to the shortage of quality used cars.
  
- On a calendar year-to-date basis the total market is now down by a significant 28.8%. It is likely that the numbers will show a very similar decline by calendar year-end. Compared to the record sales achieved in 2006, the market is down almost 50%.
  
- Growth in new vehicle market of 6% - 8% for next 9 to 12 months is anticipated.
  
- Financial performance :
  - The used vehicle department has improved its profitability in the current year. Both the Parts and Service departments continue to deliver solid results and the new vehicle department delivered improved results although the margins remain extremely low.
  - The car rental industry continues to face challenging times, impacted by price wars and increases in insurance costs and new vehicle pricing. However, interest rate reductions have reduced the holding cost of the entire vehicle rental fleet.
  - The Insurance Services division continues to perform well, with our penetration levels into McCarthy dealerships at record highs. Insurance Equity Portfolios have performed well and the underwriting result has improved.

- Results have been further improved by the benefits of the restructuring and turnaround strategies undertaken in F2009.
- Major strategic challenges :
  - New vehicle margin restoration.
  - Sourcing of quality used car stock at right prices.
  - Further rationalisation / consolidation of McCarthy dealer network (smaller franchises) where possible.
- Potential growth opportunities :
  - Selective expansion of franchise portfolio (Citroen/Mahindra).
  - Broadening of insurance platform / Full use of licences.
  - World Cup Soccer 2010 opportunities for car rental business.