



PR 638 issued: 24<sup>th</sup> October 2003

Starts.....

**BRASS IS TOPS BAR-NONE  
AT CORNWALLIS**

**The Bar-top business**

The manufacture of bar-top furniture is a thriving industry and no one addresses it with more design and manufacturing talent, enthusiasm and success than the Sant Group of Tipton.

Within close proximity of each other in the heart of the Black Country three corporate divisions comprise the main structure of the Sant Group:

- Sant Castings Ltd is a market leader, casting in brass for in-house use via Cornwallis Ltd. The company also manufactures for trade customers involved in sanitary ware, door furniture and electrical products.
- Sant Products Ltd carries a heavy investment in machining capability, serving the Group's CNC machining and other non-ferrous needs, and
- Cornwallis Ltd markets its own, extremely comprehensive range of bar-top drinks dispensers.

Sant Castings Ltd is the parent company and Cornwallis, a company who's brand-name has been well recognised for over 25 years as a quality leader in the catering trade, who manufacture a wide variety of original products in designs specific to the UK, European and, more recently, the American markets.

In the bar trade the proprietor's image is very much established across the bar-top itself, exactly in the customer's line of sight. The welcome and invitation, therefore, must be implicit in the very first impression formed by the discerning clientele.

Often the choice of one or other refreshing beverage is taken on impulse, as the client glances across a series of illuminated product logos on the dispenser heads.

Quality here is therefore a paramount feature as the dispenser itself is an intimate part of the ambiance. It must say the right things visually to the customer. The bar-top dispenser, of course, also remains in full view during consumption at the bar so any design must be attractive but not excessively overt.

Some beverage manufacturers commission custom fonts when launching a new drink so that the product has image-continuity right through to the bar-top at the point of sale.

Themed and personalised bars similarly specify highly distinctive and unique products to be manufactured by Cornwallis. Designing such products is a combination of art and engineering.

Cornwallis accommodate these 'specials' readily in their comprehensive manufacturing facility but the bulk of the production is in the specific ranges for each geographical market. Traditional and Continental have widely differing styles: the six head Warwick widely seen in UK bars, and the three head Cygnet, just one of the Continental range which includes Bistros, Swan Necks and many more can be viewed on [www.santgroup.com](http://www.santgroup.com).

### **Brass, beauty and design**

Brass is the material used for the vast bulk of components making up Cornwallis' products for a continuously-linked chain of reasons.

Starting with quality and appearance, brass is easily finished to the attractive self-colour associated with the traditional bar-top. In either a polished or lacquered state it is clean, hygienic and durable with a natural beauty.

Brass readily accepts chrome or gold plating and its inherent corrosion resistance means no rust blisters or cracks commonly seen on inferior, steel-substrated products.

Beneath the beauty of the cosmetics, however, lies the complexity permitted by the manufacturing processes used. The designer's view of liquid dispensers and their control is a world of internal, inter-locating passages, tubes, end-caps, flanges, levers and valve mechanisms.

Brass die-casting in Sant's own foundry uses finely detailed sand cores placed in steel dies to create passages that could not be produced by any other method. This ensures complete flexibility for the designer.

'Near net' is a word regularly associated with manufacturing processes in brass, meaning that the casting is close to a finished product even after a single manufacturing stage, in this case casting, with the very minimum of post machining being required.

For this the Sant Group has invested in sophisticated CNC facilities so that any final operations, together with other components machined from bar and tube stock, are readily and economically produced in-house. Brass itself machines to a superb finish at three times the metal-removal speed associated with steel.

The closing link, making the brass chain a continuous loop, is its recyclability. Feeders and fettlings from the die-casting operation are re-melted on-site to be used in the next production without any degradation. Swarf from the machining operation commands a good price and is returned to the mill for re-processing back into high-speed machining bar.

One could say perhaps that brass goes from 'bar' to 'bar' and back again since all brass items are recyclable at the end of their useful lives or when fashion dictates a change of style. The old is turned into the new with nothing wasted. No other material with the exception of the precious metals such as gold and silver can match the ecological frugality of brass.

### **Brass and the manufacturer**

Brian Taylor, Production Manager of Cornwallis, was invited to call "last orders" on this subject and he commented:

"If brass did not exist, manufacturers would have to invent it just to service the bar-top business alone. The inherent properties are so important to our products that no other material will do. We need quality, manufacturing ease, corrosion resistance, economy in speed of manufacture, cosmetic attraction and recyclability, in fact every facet has equal relevance.

At the Sant Group we have maximised our in-house skills and our die-casting operation is world-class. This enables us to support our Cornwallis operation with almost any complexity of component that a designer can specify.

We are not suggesting that readers habitually go from 'bar to bar' but on the next visit to a place of refreshment look out for Cornwallis bar-top products. Thanks to brass they really are 'the tops'."

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Word count from 'Starts....to....ends': Approx 935 words

Illustration:

A typical four stream bar top assembly from Cornwallis



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