



# Network news

AJS Embroidery Services has launched the new Tajima UK Network of authorised dealers to provide local sales and service support across the UK and Ireland. Images spoke to **Paul Garside**, AJS sales executive, to find out how the new network will benefit embroidery machinery customers...



(From left to right) Mick Jackson, MGJ Embroidery Machine Services; Paul Garside, sales executive, AJS Embroidery Machine Services; Dave Priestley, Yorkshire Machine Services; Terry Hillman, Acadia Design; Kenny Cochran, Punchcraft/Tajima Scotland; Tony Mallon, GTS Sewing Machines; Alan Graham, Tajima Ireland; Mark Hobkirk, Hobkirk Sewing Machines; Tony Dorsey, managing director, AJS Embroidery Machine Services; John Bingham, EL Grain Sewing Machines; John Grain, EL Grain Sewing Machines; Eric Thompson; Paul Tyson, Tysons Sewing Machines; and Gary Sharpe, GTS Sewing Machines.

**T**ajima embroidery machine owners now have an authorised dealer 'on their doorstep' following the launch of the new Tajima UK Network by AJS Embroidery Machine Services. The network of ten strategically placed, authorised dealers, will cover the whole of the UK and Ireland, with dealers specialising in the supply of single-head embroidery machines.

AJS, based in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, has been the sole importer of Tajima embroidery machines since 1994. The company's decision to radically extend its presence within the UK market was taken against a backdrop of a growing demand for single-head machines, and the decision by some competing manufacturers and distributors of industrial embroidery machines to pull out of the European markets or cease trading altogether.

AJS appointed Paul Garside, who previously headed up Aisin UK's Toyota dealer network, to set up the Tajima UK Network, with a focus on single-head sales. Paul approached the Toyota dealers to sound them out about selling and supporting Tajima machines, which he describes as, "a natural progression for them". He reports that all of the Toyota dealers have joined the new

Tajima network (see Tajima UK Network: dealer details, below).

Paul comments: "The dealers are effectively selling and supporting the same product; the single-head Toyota ESP 9100 Net and Tajima Neo are the same machine and are manufactured in the same factory by the Tajima-owned Tokai Industrial Sewing Machine Co. Ltd. However, joining the Tajima UK Network means that they also now have access to a much wider range of products and support, including multi-head embroidery machines."

### Full support

Alan Graham, of Tajima Ireland, has already sold two Tajima 6-head machines, not to mention the sale of four Tajima single-heads.

"The ability to now sell and service multi-head machines along with the single-heads is a major benefit to us," says Alan. "As a customer's business expands we can supply a modular system comprising of networked single-head machines or a multi-head machine, whichever best meets the customer's needs. That's something we couldn't offer before."

He adds that the move to Tajima has been

"seamless" and cites the back-up provided by AJS as one of the key reasons he was keen to join the new dealers' network. "Back-up is important. AJS is a strong company and the leading UK supplier. Tony Dorsey (managing director) and Alan Sisson (president) are plain speaking, honest, straightforward guys who play with a 'straight bat'. And we're used to working with Paul Garside who has a very good reputation within the embroidery market – with Paul at the helm and with the backing of all the distributors I can't see the new network being anything other than a success. I'm very happy with the way everything is going – it's all positive."

Eric Thompson, (dealer for the North East), is unequivocal in his praise for the AJS set-up. "It's the best thing I've ever done (taking on the Tajima dealership), I just wish I'd done it years ago," he comments. "The set-up is unbelievable and my customers are already benefiting. I've sold three machines in the past few weeks and they're all in and working. As well as the stock of new machines, the service on spare parts is fantastic. The (AJS) spare parts department is huge – you just tell them what you need and they send it. I ordered a part for a machine at one of my big-



The Tajima TEJT-IIC1501: NEO2 single-head embroidery machine.

a sales and service centre in the North West of England, we jumped at the opportunity to work with them and add Tajima machines to our range of products. These are exciting times for us: we consider Tajima to be the best embroidery machines in the world. We are delighted to be working closely with such a product and with AJS Embroidery Machine Services whose president, Alan Sisson I have known for many years.”

**The singles market**

One of the main drivers for AJS’s expansion plans, (including the setting up of the Tajima UK Network) was the growing demand for single-head embroidery machines. Paul Garside reports that the company has received a surge of sales enquiries related to single-head machines from newcomers to the industry – often people who have been made redundant and are looking to start their own business – as well as established businesses that are looking to expand their current portfolio of services. “Tough trading times have forced many businesses to diversify what they offer to customers,” says Paul. He adds that businesses are adding a new single-head to allow them to offer a mobile embroidery service, and also to act as a cost-effective sampling machine. “We offer three of the most feature-packed single head models available, backed by a complete range of consumables, accessories and spare parts,” he comments.

In today’s market, service is more important than ever and this is where the Tajima UK Network will really score, according to Paul. “What we’re offering is unrivalled. Our support is second to none: the Tajima centres will provide regional support and peace of mind unlike any other supplier.”

Paul adds that there is “a lot of instability” within the embroidery machinery manufacturing market at present and that this is causing prospective customers to be ever more thorough when doing their ‘homework’ on new purchases.



Tajima's TEMX-C1501 Evolution single-head.

“Buying a new machine is a considerable investment and ‘security’ is important for customers; they need to know that they will receive the service and support they require in the long term. That can only benefit AJS and the Tajima UK Network; we’re going from strength to strength, we’re a big operation now. Customers have access to local support, plus other dealers around the country that they can talk to; they can network with fellow Tajima machine owners and take advantage of on-site training on all products from fully manufacturer-trained staff. These are all strong selling points for anybody that’s considering buying a new embroidery machine.”

AJS managing director, Tony Dorsey echoes Paul’s comments. He says: “Tajima is a big name within the embroidery trade and is synonymous with quality and reliability. The main reason for our recent expansion is the need to give unmatched local knowledge, training, service, and customer care to the increasing number of people looking to start, or add, a single-head machine to their business as a profit centre.

“We have noticed a big increase in the number of people looking to start their own business or add embroidery into the existing business. We have worked hard and brought together ten of the best independent sewing machine dealers from across the country. They have the knowledge and dedication which will give an unmatched service, with quality products at a reasonable price.”

**Web: [www.tajimauk.co.uk](http://www.tajimauk.co.uk).**



The Tajima TFMX-C1501.

ger customers recently and it arrived within 24 hours.” Eric adds that after a slow start to 2009, the first three months as a Tajima dealer have seen business “steaming”.

Kenny Cochrane of Punchcraft/Tajima Scotland reports that the new network has met with a good response north of the border. “It (the network) is extremely good news for everyone, business is going very well. Paul (Garside) has done extremely well pulling it altogether,” he says. Kenny notes that AJS carries a full complement of spare parts for the Toyota 9100 machine as well as the Tajima machines. “We will continue to provide full support for all of our existing Toyota customers,” he stresses.

Hobkirk Sewing Machines has recently built a dedicated embroidery showroom at its Blackburn premises, which will house the latest Tajima machines and Tajima DGML Pulse software. The company has even employed an extra member of staff to assist in the new project. Mark Hobkirk, sales director, comments: “When AJS felt the need to expand their business further by having

**TAJIMA UK NETWORK: DEALER DETAILS**



Region	Dealer	Contact Details
Scotland	Punchcraft/Tajima Scotland	01236 734222
Ireland	Tajima Ireland	02892 601200
North East	Eric Thompson	01670 354878
North West & North Wales	Hobkirk Sewing Machines	01254 56563
Yorkshire	Yorkshire Machine Services	07950 259010
East Anglia	GTS Sewing Machines	01295 701384
Midlands	EL Grain Sewing Machines	0115 927 1155
South Wales	Terry Hillman Acadia Design	07841 345662
South West	MGJ Embroidery Machine Services	01793 511103
South East	Tyson's Sewing Machines	0208 574 1570