

# Centre Design merges with rival to form Fuzzwire

by Andrew Mernin, [The Journal](#) | [Jan 17 2012](#)

WORKERS at a North East firm which makes shopping centre displays have been assured their jobs are safe following a merger with a Yorkshire-based rival that has created a £9m-a-year business.

Centre Design, which employs 50 people at its Northumberland headquarters, has merged with LDJ Design & Display, of Keighley, West Yorkshire, to form Fuzzwire.

While there were no redundancies in the move, the boss of the newly formed firm last night said he expects to take add more staff to its 130-strong team, while doubling its annual turnover to £18m by 2015.

Prudhoe-based Centre Design has been in operation since 1986 and specialises in supplying models and installations to large shopping malls such as the Metrocentre in Gateshead.

Alongside LDJ, which also started life in 1986, Centre Design was a leading player in the European retail market, designing displays, animatronics and lighting that are used typically over the festive period.

The company's products also have wider applications beyond retail, including the events and entertainment industries.

Fuzzwire will now operate across the two sites, with new chief executive Ian Stead keen to target opportunities nationally and globally by tapping into the group's deeper pool of resources.

He said: "Fuzzwire will have greater scale and resources than any other business of its type in Europe. We firmly intend it will quickly become recognised as the clear market leader in 3D design – not just in the UK but internationally.

"With Fuzzwire we've created a vehicle capable of bringing new levels of innovation and quality into our industry. We have unrivalled experience and a highly-motivated team that's passionate about delivering creativity to delight both our clients and their customers."

Stead added that the new business remains committed to maintaining a base in the North East, with no plans to bring the two sites under one roof in the foreseeable future.

As well as hunting down new opportunities overseas, Fuzzwire will also focus its attention on growing its in-house development team to keep it up to speed with new breakthroughs in technology used in displays.

Having appointed a new chief executive and operations director, the company is also currently recruiting for a creative director and a client relationships director.