4.5 Transcript

Well, the next stop on our tour of Bob's Brushes is the production department and I thought I'd just show you this. Each and every brush which leaves the factory has our logo on the handle. In the old days, applying them used to be a manual task but these days it's all fully automated. It's called a "logo machine" and at the moment it's set up for fixing logos onto the handles of 1.5 inch paintbrushes.

Let me tell you how it works. The paintbrush handles are placed into a large metal container just to the left of the conveyor belt there, called the "input hopper". This hopper vibrates, causing the handles to drop down a kind of funnel one by one onto a conveyer belt. This belt then carries the handles up into the main body of the machine. As they enter the machine, the handles move onto a rotating scroll. This rotating action realigns the handles and they are then carried along to the far end. At this point they are transferred to the handle wheel. This wheel carries the handles up in an anti-clockwise direction towards a metal roller, which is heated, and this is where the logo is applied.

Now, about these logos. The logos arrive from the suppliers on a long strip of special paper wound round a big drum. It works a bit like putting film into a camera. You see just to the right of the control station there? That's the "logo strip payoff drum". There are about 25,000 logos on that. From this, the logo strip is then fed round a series of what we call "dancers", but what are technically referred to as "guiding pins". These are a very important part of the machine as it's crucial to maintain exactly the right tension in the logo strip. Anyway, the logo strip moves back towards the handle wheel and as it passes between the wheel and the roller, the logo is transferred to the handle. The waste strip, now empty of logos, carries on and is wound round the "logo strip take up drum" on the far right there. And the brush handles? Well, after the logo is applied by the roller, they continue round and are unloaded through a special cylinder at the top left-hand side of the wheel, which blows them down a pipe into a waiting box at the back of the machine. Clever stuff: fast, simple, efficient.

Ok, now have you ever wondered about how tooth brushes are made? Well, in the old days…