

About RMD Kwikform

RMD Kwikform designs and supplies formwork, shoring, access and safety solutions for the construction industry. The company was founded in the UK over 50 years ago and has its head office in Aldridge in the West Midlands. Globally, the company has operations in Ireland, Spain, South Africa, Chile, the Middle East, Hong Kong, Korea, Philippines, Australia and New Zealand. RMD Kwikform employs 250 people in the UK and has around 1500 employees worldwide.

The pressures of taking IT global

The company's IT systems were initially designed to provide support for its operations on a country by country basis. In 2006, as a result of global integration, the decision was taken to implement operational standards across all countries. This meant RMD required a brand new way of delivering and supporting IT.

This new process would require 24/7 customer support and around the clock management in order to sustain operations in all time zones. The IT department would be challenged by this with the existing resources available and to provide the necessary support for a single worldwide system.

Maximising existing resources

Bansh Mistry, head of IT at RMD comments, "As with many IT departments we are often asked to solve business issues by having to find efficiencies with the people and budgets we already have at our disposal. This means we have to think



creatively and sometimes do things we may not have considered before. In this instance we looked into the concept of managed services and found that it had the potential to be a far more cost effective solution than large financial investments and recruiting additional personnel."

"There are 11 people in our IT team but we would have had to recruit at least another five people in order to deliver such a solution ourselves. Additional headcount was not an option, however, and nor was managing a complex infrastructure with all the international complexities involved."

Finding a platform for success

The fundamental objective for RMD was the provision of a resilient, high availability technical platform. Continued access to their Business Systems Application (Microsoft Dynamics AX) as well as access to facilities such as email and Internet services was crucial. These services needed to be subject to the highest levels of security, centrally managed, and scalable to accommodate change and future growth.

Star was identified as a provider who had the right levels of customer service needed to give Bansh the peace of mind he was looking for if he was going to outsource some key IT functions. Work then quickly began with a project to replace the existing communications network in the UK and Ireland, and providing the VPN communication for all the international companies.

Overcoming a global challenge

Bansh continues, "Working with Star has released us from the financial and operational worries when rolling out systems to a new country. We can now roll out our business applications to any international office, quickly and easily. The model works well for us, and the central management provides greater visibility and improved control!"

"We provide training for end users in how to use and access the system and, as all the applications are hosted by Star, our internal IT team can concentrate on making IT more strategic. Even when company resources remain static we like to think we can now work smarter."

What partnership means to RMD

Bansh is clear on the benefits of working with Star: "It's a professionally managed relationship and we have access to a dedicated Customer Service Manager and Account Manager whenever we need it. Additionally, we can also tap into Star's technical knowledge and services as and when required, which provides us with an optimal cost model."

"What this means to RMD is that we have access to an enterprise-level infrastructure and tools without the capital expenditure and exposure to risk, all at a fixed monthly cost. What I really appreciate most about this is that our IT team can focus on using technology to solve strategic business issues and not get drained by tactical tasks. We now have the robust systems in place that are secure and stable without having to recruit new skills into the team to manage them."

A flexible and agile future

One of the biggest benefits RMD has experienced is the ability to deliver additional services, such as the accelerated implementation of Microsoft Dynamics AX, which is centrally managed and delivered to all RMD businesses worldwide.

Bansh concludes, "We now use Star Business Email as a dedicated hosting service for Microsoft Exchange. Because it's run for us by Star we can keep our business email running with maximum uptime. This service guarantees availability of email and is supported by the highest levels of security and resilience. All in all, we now have a business supported by a technology platform that any large enterprise would be proud of."

