

SUPERFAST BUSINESS

Harnessing technology to grow your business



CASE STUDY

Business takes the plunge into digital technologies with great success

The Business

Dorchester-based Cresta Leisure constructs and maintains swimming pools, spas and hot tubs. It provides a full range of design and consultancy services and has a team of engineers who deliver responsive pool and spa maintenance services. Director Simon Bareham decided to take advantage of Superfast Business and take a fresh look at the efficiency of the organisation's processes and IT systems.

The Opportunity

A Superfast Business adviser spent some time listening to how the company uses its IT systems before creating a diagnostic support plan and recommending a specialist adviser who then met key members of Cresta staff to integrate their experience and business knowledge. The specialist adviser consultation revealed that diarising maintenance call-outs, job creation input and output, job sheet return and the transfer of information into Sage were still largely manual operations, keeping remote engineers out of the automation loop and making work for administrative staff at head office.

Support Provided

The main area of potential to emerge from the consultation was for greater automation. If engineers had real-time mobile access to business systems via tablet devices, they could input their own data directly and allow customers to sign off visits electronically. This would make overall processes more efficient and reduce the time between job sheet completion and bill production – the key to improving cash flow.

"The support we received from our specialist adviser was excellent," says Simon. "They listened to us and got a grasp of how we do things. It wasn't a question of coming in and telling us we needed a brand new approach – they saw that many of our systems were working well. They recognised we've done some clever things, and so their plan was genuinely based on improvements that would help the business as it is."

The Benefits

Simon estimates that for an investment of £2,500-£3,000 in tablets for engineers and software upgrades, the business will



save around £10,000 a year in recovered hours, including office staff who will no longer need to spend time reconciling information manually – a healthy Return on Investment.

Common engineers' issues – that they can't access enough information to complete a task or that they need to return to the yard and look for parts advice online – will soon be a thing of the past. Armed with a SIM-carded tablet, they will be able to download product information directly from the company database, and schedule return visits in real time. There will be less duplication of data input in the office, and Cresta will have a seamless audit trail for every allocated task, from job creation to completion.

"I'm really happy that we took the plunge and used this opportunity to take a look at our management processes," says Simon. "I think a lot of small businesses are sceptical about the notion of getting anything for free. They think there must be a catch somewhere. But if there's help like Superfast Business to be had, you should take it. No matter how good a manager you are, having an impartial expert come in and look at your business processes from a macro rather than a micro perspective is invaluable."

Find out how your business can benefit.
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