

Delivery Partner

Webber (NW) Ltd

VEC

Background

Based in the Kirkby Industrial Estate, Webber (NW) Ltd is one of the fastest-growing design, fabrication and installation companies in the North West. Specialising in structural steel, pipe work, installations and construction projects, the team work with clients in every part of the country to create and build bespoke, lasting, memorable projects. Some of their exciting clients include Everton Football Club's new Bramley Dock stadium and automotive giants Jaguar Land Rover and Ford.

Challenges

After welcoming new members to their management team and outlining innovative plans for the company, Webber (NW) Ltd are striving to grow through innovation and the personal development of their team.

To achieve this, the company are undertaking an ambitious digital transformation to impact all departments of the business, from incorporating a state-of-the-art Digital Suite for enhanced communication to developing a bespoke new app for digitising operations.

The initial phase of the digital transformation involves converting paper-based records to digital formats and automating financial and administrative processes. Webber (NW) Ltd also aims to digitise staff training, booking of annual leave and checking in processes for accurate record-keeping and to facilitate quicker access to information.

An anticipated challenge was breaking the cultural barrier across the Webber (NW) Ltd teams, currently using non-digital tools for many day-to-day tasks. The management team wanted to familiarise the teams with new and emerging tools to provide greater ease and convenience. This also included the use of QR codes, barcodes and tick boxes for quick data entry.

The proposed digital app will be exclusively used by the Webber (NW) Ltd teams, accessing digital records, enabling photo uploads of jobs and even helping the teams to showcase digital product designs on remote devices such as tablets for enhanced client communication.

Solution

Webber (NW) Ltd worked closely with the VEC (Virtual Engineering Centre) to develop a digitalisation roadmap, identifying areas for digitising systems whilst considering speed and cost-effectiveness. Despite several targeted changes considered as small, these will deliver a considerable impact to the company.

The changes identified needed to be easily implemented into current processes with minimal training and disruption, encouraging further digitalisation.

In-house training supports the upskilling of Webber teams, becoming familiar with digital tools and equipment, such as tablets for on-site client communication and demonstrations.

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The VEC teams developed a basic demo of a custom Quality Assurance and work-flow system, enabling testing of job tracking methods like QR codes and NFC tags (near field communication tags), for improved tracking of raw materials and the contributions of their staff. This system also helps teams to better understand the potential benefits before implementing a comprehensive ERP system overhaul.

The close partnership between VEC and Webber (NW) Ltd allowed the engineering teams to acquire a comprehensive insight into the systems development and efficient management before the project handover phase, empowering the company to sustain the trial phase and demonstrate the desired ERP functionalities to prospective vendors.

Webber (NW) Ltd and VEC will research how they can adopt QR codes and digitise hand-drawn sketches of their products as a great way to keep accurate records of previous drawings whilst quickly making changes to product designs with ease. Based on the proposed app, the Webber (NW) Ltd management teams will also be able to accurately track the project status' and staff using geo-fencing technology.

“Don't let perfection get in the way of progress.”

Nicky Silvano
Change Director, Webber (NW) Ltd

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Impact

This partnership has pinpointed various areas for minor adjustments that, when combined, will result in a significant impact.

Webber (NW) Ltd collaborated with the VEC on a successful grant application. The obtained funds have supported Webber (NW) Ltd to establish a brand new in-house digital training facility. This initiative aims to enhance staff knowledge of tools for daily operations, improve workflow efficiencies through automation and digitalisation, and address cultural challenges within the organisation.

Since slowly integrating digital systems into the workforce, Webber (NW) Ltd has seen a 10% increase in labour efficiencies as the project further increases in the future.

During the past 24 months, the company has undergone significant impactful changes. Consequently, Webber's turnover has risen from £4.2m to £5.9m within the first year, with a predicted £9m in October 2024. The target for the end of the following financial year is £12m to achieve a 100% increase over 12 months, showcasing the value delivered throughout the company by streamlining efficiencies, improving facilities for optimising systems in addition to securing new International contracts.

