



Case Study

Rutland Plastics

For Rutland Plastics, internet connectivity is as essential as electricity. AdEPT helps ensure there's no 'blackout' on this vital ICT service.

Overview

As a privately owned company founded in 1956, Rutland Plastics (RP) started its life moulding flowers and accessories for budgerigars, which had become all the rage after the war. So successful were the products, RP launched its own range of children's toys, called 'Rutland', setting a precedent for the kind of astute innovation that remains at the company's heart today.

In the 66 years that have followed, RP has diversified its services to include everything from concept design to 3D printing. It now employs more than 140 staff from the local community and has enjoyed a string of accreditations and accolades as it has grown – including the coveted 'Processor of the Year' prize in the December 2021 Plastics Industry Awards.

"We work with organisations in a wide range of industries," explains Managing Director Steve Ayre. "This means we produce everything from small plastic parts for the medical sector to large pipe fittings for gas and water infrastructure projects. And because we're a 24/7 operation, we need connectivity with the same continuity of service – it's as important as power."

Situation

With a degree in electronic engineering and a Masters in Engineering Business Management, Steve is not only the Managing Director – he is responsible for Rutland Plastics' ICT, too.

In 2017 he came to work with AdEPT – primarily Sales Manager Grant Read and Engineering Manager Steve Bradshaw – when RP was seeking support for its existing Avaya IP Office phone system. The relationship grew from there, as Grant and Steve Ayre describe for this case study.

Grant explains: "The work evolved to include upgrading RP's phone system. It's still an on-premise PBX, but it's now running SIP trunks rather than the ISDN."

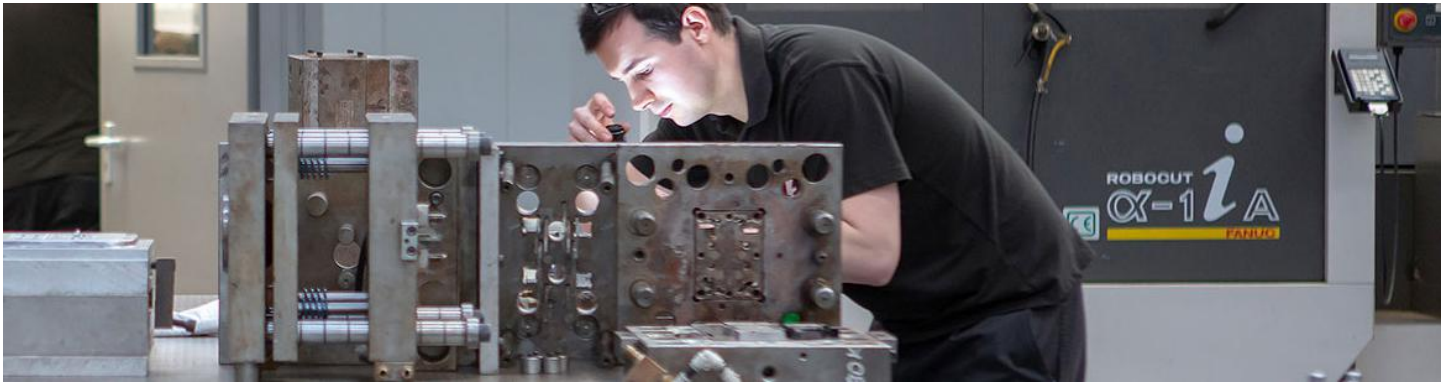
"Yes, it was gradual stepping stones," adds Steve. "And since then, AdEPT has taken on our mobiles, through O2, as well as setting up a leased line.

"One of the things that stand out for me was how the work started –

Grant persuaded me to keep the kit we already had. You could tell the overselling of products isn't Grant's game – that upfront honesty is really important."

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Solution

In the years RP has worked with AdEPT, the work has broadened to include different areas of ICT, with a focus on ensuring RP's internet connectivity is impeccable.

"We were looking at renewing the support for our firewall," says Steve. "So I asked Grant if this was something AdEPT could help with.

"From there, looking at our needs and our plans, we went with a high availability firewall from AdEPT – it's critical to keep our internet connection open."

Grant adds: "What was interesting about that work was at the time, a new reporting package had just been released. We demonstrated these features to Steve, and he decided to go with them – another example of RP's innovative nature. We all learn a lot that way."

Though not all high-availability firewalls are true high availability, AdEPT uses best-in-class solutions. With RP, it's a high-availability Fortinet Next Generation Firewall, where there are essentially two firewalls in a mesh environment – so if one firewall fails, the other is fully functional until the faulty one is fixed, meaning there is no single point of failure. We set it up with various tailored features, including unified threat protection, web/DNS filtering, intrusion prevention system protection, and network layer antivirus – all based on Fortinet's FortiGuard Labs.

Working closely with Steve, we built it to ensure it fits perfectly into RP's customer environment – because, after all, every customer's security requirements are unique. With this approach, RP benefits from a whole range of cyber security and protection services in one, all underpinned

by AdEPT's expertise and ongoing support.

Steve explains how this translates in practice: "More and more of our systems are cloud-based, so the reliability of our internet connection is more and more important.

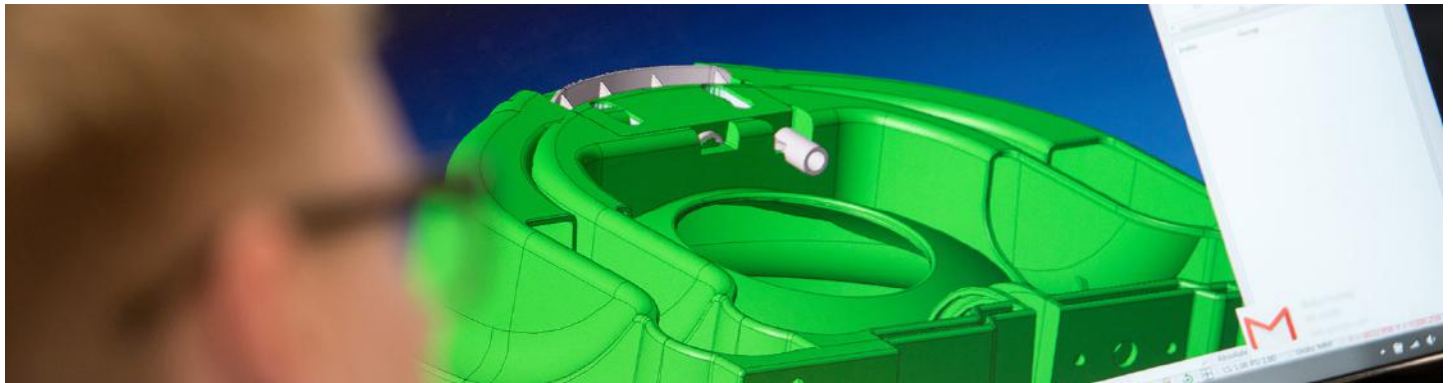
"For example, our ERP system is in the cloud – so without access to it, we can't see our purchasing, our invoicing, and our stock. Staff would literally be searching high and low in our warehouse for widgets to send out."

Though manufacturing work like that of RP can, in reality, only happen on site, RP's ICT arrangement means for those staff who can work from home, making the transition has been straightforward. With this setup, says Steve, it becomes 'irrelevant' where a desk-based employee works.



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Beyond the technology, the relationship between RP and AdEPT makes all the difference.

“With AdEPT, there’s never a hard sell – that set us off on the right footing,” says Steve. “And I have both Grant’s and Steve Bradshaw’s mobile numbers – I’ve even called Steve out of hours, and he’s answered straight away, suggesting different approaches to address an issue. He knows us and our systems.”

Grant adds: “Of course, I have a whole team behind me for technical support – but it is Steve Bradshaw and me who work day-to-day with RP.

“And as the company’s MD, Steve is very good at explaining where the company is going, and that makes my life very easy – so I can find solutions to not only fix an issue, but to make sure it’s going to last, too.

“Also, I try to look after his wallet as well as his technical needs – we’ll build for the future and not just look for the short-term. It’s a very personal relationship – seeing the bigger

picture means we can put our finger on it and get the end result much more quickly.”

As a partnership that has grown from RP’s initial enquiries that have been along the lines of ‘I don’t suppose AdEPT can help with this’, Steve’s summary of the relationship is particularly rewarding for us as a technology company:

“The continuity of service from AdEPT has helped build up knowledge – and all of that knowledge helps create a solution to a problem, not just a piece of hardware.”

- **High-availability firewall: Fortinet Next Generation Firewall with unified threat protection, web/DNS filtering, intrusion prevention system protection, network layer antivirus etc – all based on Fortinet’s FortiGuard Labs.**
- **Technical support**
- **Leased line**

To find out more about Rutland Plastics, visit

<https://www.rutlandplastics.co.uk/>



Get in touch

For more information on any of our services or to talk about how we may be able to help you, please get in touch with us using the details below.

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