

Material Gain

When Laundry Technology Centre (LTC) was let down by its existing IT supplier, the company decided it was time to make a change. With operations around the world it needed the right expertise to facilitate around-the-clock working and provide it with a strong IT infrastructure that could support its global expansion.

The team based at Ilkley LTC certainly know a thing or two about fabrics. Founded in 1992 and now serving some of the world's most elite hotel chains, textile manufacturers, industrial laundries and healthcare organisations, they're experts in assessing textile performance and managing laundry efficiency.

"Ask people to picture a laundry, and what springs to mind for most is a typical laundrette or hotel laundry," says Steve Anderton, who joined LTC ten years ago and is now the company's managing director. "But when it comes to our clients' laundries that couldn't be further from the truth. In a typical week their plants are cleaning and pressing up to two million items and they employ between 300 and 400 people to do it. This is laundry on an industrial scale. Performance and production quality is dependent on having the right equipment and processes in place - and people with the right skills and training. That's where we come in."



LTC provides three types of service: consultancy, training and fabric testing. On the consultancy side, it assists in the design of new laundries, addresses specific issues in cleaning quality and looks at how to drive efficiencies in the laundry process. Its global training arm provides training to all levels of staff in the laundry industry; from CEOs to machine operatives, but its true specialism lies in fabric testing. With clients such as luxury bed and bath linens maker, Frette and The Mandarin Hotel Group, LTC provides a service that ensures its clients' fabrics meet only the highest quality standards.

"Our lab can receive anything up to 500 samples a week," says Steve. We can be asked to test for any number of things, including strength, durability, fibre length and whether a fabric has been chemically damaged. Aside from linens, we also test work uniforms too. We can analyse garments for their resistance to specific organisms such as MRSA, Salmonella and E.coli or look for traces of allergens such as peanuts and pollen."

LTC first contacted Cosurica for an IT services quote around four years ago, when they realised they'd outgrown their existing IT support provider, a computer hardware shop who were limited in their expertise. After exercising due diligence and getting quotes from a number of companies — including Cosurica — the company initially chose another provider, one of the UK's largest IT support companies, on the basis of a recommendation they'd received from another company.



“Looking back, it was one of the worst decisions we’ve ever made” says Steve. “We’d fallen under the misconception that, because this IT company were well known and more expensive that they’d be better. We were wrong. Rather than benefit from the expertise of many different people, every time we spoke to them we’d get somebody new. There was no continuity and I always got the feeling that they didn’t really know our business or know us. The biggest problem was that I was not receiving the service I needed. Communication was poor and I didn’t know when I could expect a problem to be resolved. After two years I was so fed up that I cancelled the contract a year early.”

Steve came back to Cosurica to see if they’d still be able to help with LTC’s IT support. “I knew that Cosurica were a smaller company, so I didn’t know if they could supply the breadth of services we’d need.” says Steve. “But after having a meeting with Gareth Harrison, the company’s director, he put my mind at ease.”

Cosurica were able to help LTC by providing a better level of service than their previous provider, and at a much lower monthly cost, but it wasn’t just the cost reduction that Steve knows they benefitted from.

“We agreed to give them a go with a one year contract and since then we haven’t looked back,” says Steve. “We now buy all our IT services from Cosurica and have also just switched over our broadband to them too. Michelle’s work with the new network cabling has been excellent, but what she really excels at is finding us the right hardware and software. I just need to tell her what we’re looking to do and then she comes back to me with the right solution. We’ve just changed our old laptops for Microsoft Surface Books and the difference has been amazing. I love the flexibility it gives me when I’m holding training sessions as I can release the screen and pass it round for members of the group to view. The stylus tool means I can also make notes on the screen as if it was a virtual whiteboard.”

LTC’s company directors, Steve and Stuart typically spend around one or two days in the office, with the remainder of their time spent on national and international visits. The last few years have seen their operations expand to serving clients throughout the USA, Europe and the Middle East. For the directors, being able to access up-to-date documentation and lab results around the clock when working in a different time zone has been essential.



“About 18 months ago Cosurica managed our migration to Office 365 so we could access our email and our server from the cloud and update Windows. It happened so quickly and flawlessly that I barely remember the transition. What I do appreciate though are the benefits it has brought us. There’s no more worrying whether I’ve got the right files on my laptop or delays if I need to retrieve some historical testing data. It’s all there if I need to access it.”

Steve is confident that LTC has now made the right decision when it comes to choosing an IT provider.

“Cosurica has a long standing team who really care about what they do. The people at our previous provider had limited people and social skills and spoke in technical language that we couldn’t understand. With Cosurica it’s a much more human experience and they take a genuine interest in our business. In the next five years we’re going to see an increased demand for our services and it’s reassuring to know we have an IT company that we can truly depend on to give us whatever we need, whenever we need it”.



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