

Case study



From Tradition to Technology: How Heat Seal Trade Windows Embraced Digital Innovation

Founded in 2003, Heat Seal Trade Windows (trading as HS Trade) has established itself as a leader in manufacturing high-quality uPVC windows and doors for trade customers across the UK. With a commitment to exceptional quality, competitive pricing, and unrivalled customer service, HS Trade has built a strong reputation among installers nationwide. The company's Managing Director, Michael Gromett, emphasises their mission to support the success of their clients by providing fast, flexible turnaround times and personalised service. However, as the industry evolved, so did the need for HS Trade to embrace digital transformation to enhance their operations and maintain their competitive edge.

The Challenge

As HS Trade sought to improve its manufacturing processes, the company faced a significant challenge: internal resistance to adopting new technologies. Traditionally reliant on standard manufacturing machines, the staff were not well-versed in digital tools and processes.

What's more, HS Trade found itself at a crossroads as industry advancements began to outpace their traditional manufacturing methods. The company was facing increased pressure to improve efficiency, meet growing customer demands, and maintain their competitive advantage. Their manual processes were becoming a bottleneck, slowing down production and risking costly errors. Without adopting new digital tools, HS Trade risked falling behind competitors who were quick to embrace modern technology. The company realised that in order to expand and stay ahead, adopting digital technology was not just an option - it was a necessity for survival and future growth.

Recognising the need for change, HS Trade engaged with Made Smarter East Midlands and started their digital transformation journey, beginning with a meeting with

an adviser. This initial step involved participating in a digital transformation course, which opened their eyes to the potential benefits of technology in their manufacturing processes.

Despite the initial resistance to change, the team at HS Trade understood the necessity of adapting to new technologies. The challenge was not only to improve operational efficiency but also to develop a culture of innovation and openness to new ideas amongst the staff.

The Solution

To tackle these challenges, HS Trade, along with support from Made Smarter, identified a series of digital solutions aimed at enhancing process controls and workflow throughout the factory. Michael Gromett highlighted the value of Made Smarter's assistance which extended from the initial idea to full execution. This support included the introduction of digital measuring tools and systems that allowed for improved accuracy in production. By embracing technology, HS Trade not only streamlined its manufacturing processes but also empowered its staff by recognising their ideas and contributions to production.

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The digital transformation roadmap provided by their adviser proved invaluable. It outlined a clear path for implementing new technologies, which allowed HS Trade to systematically approach the transition.

The Benefits

The introduction of computer-based processes completely transformed HS Trade's manufacturing operations. New digital measuring systems improved precision, ensuring that every window and door met exact specifications, which in turn reduced waste and rework. These automated systems allowed staff to monitor the entire production line in real-time, streamlining workflows and enabling quicker decision-making. With technology now handling repetitive tasks, employees were able to focus on more complex, value-added activities, driving innovation.

As Michael Gromett, Managing Director, stated, "Embracing digital transformation has not only made us more efficient but has encouraged our team to be more innovative and engaged in improving production."

The company's participation in the digital transformation course played a critical role in making this transition a reality. This course, designed to support business leaders like Michael, offered a wealth of knowledge and practical support on adopting technology within their business. The course provided

access to academics, industry experts, and peers, each facing their own unique challenges in digital adoption, yet finding common ground in shared experiences. This collaborative learning environment allowed HS Trade to explore real-world applications of digital tools, understand their full potential, and overcome barriers to change. The insights gained were not just theoretical; they were immediately applicable, allowing HS Trade to adopt these technologies confidently and efficiently.

The results of this digital transformation have been profound. HS Trade has seen a marked improvement in efficiency and capacity due to the integration of these computer-based processes. The improved workflow has resulted in higher quality products and a greater ability to meet the growing demands of their customers. Beyond operational improvements, the transformation has fostered a more engaged and recognised workforce. Employees feel more valued, and their ideas are actively sought to further enhance production processes. The tangible benefits of this shift have helped HS Trade overcome initial resistance to change, inspiring a culture of continuous improvement across the organisation. service.

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The Future

Going forwards, HS Trade is looking forward to the future of its manufacturing operations. The company plans to continue working with the manufacturing digital technology sector to explore further advancements, including robotics and gasket insertion systems for increased efficiency. By maintaining an open mind towards new technologies, HS Trade aims to enhance safety measures and streamline production processes even further.

Michael Gromett and his team at HS Trade have experienced firsthand the positive impact of embracing digital transformation initiatives like Made Smarter East Midlands. The adoption of new technology has not only revolutionised their manufacturing processes but also unlocked new opportunities for growth and innovation. Reflecting on the journey, Michael shared, "Partnering with Made Smarter has been a game-changer for us. It's not just about improving efficiency - it's about reshaping how we think and operate as a business. We've seen our capabilities grow, and it's positioned us as a forward-thinking leader in our industry." The integration of these advanced technologies has significantly enhanced their production techniques and set the stage for continued innovation.

