

Crozier Campers Automation to drive innovation

A campervan manufacturer has accelerated growth and innovation after investing in automation and design software, with the support of Made Smarter.

Crozier Campers has brought previously sub-contracted production in-house through the adoption of CNC machinery. With complete control of production, the company has reduced build times of its Beyond range, increased capacity, and is forecast to grow by 25% over three years.

The investment has led to a new commercial partnership with Mercedes Benz to transform its Sprinter range into campervans.

Crozier has created a new production role and freed up its team to work on R&D projects and devote more time to social media marketing which has given the business international exposure.

Conor Crozier, Founder and Managing Director, said: "Made Smarter has well and truly untethered us to innovate and grow. The Mercedes accreditation and the launch of our new Beyond range is a direct consequence of the new technology.

"The solution has taken away the heavy lifting, increasing the amount we produce and the quality, enabling us to do more, and use our craftsmanship to reach new heights in product finish. The big win for us is time. We can now develop our ideas which are limitless.

"For a small business, funding this sort of investment is very difficult. We would have got there, saving up gradually. Made Smarter's support has accelerated us years ahead and changed our business forever."

The Challenge

Crozier Campers, based in Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire, was launched in 2020 by engineer Conor Crozier, who has built a team of six people skilled in engineering, carpentry and design.

Products range from day vans like Volkswagen Transporters to full size off-grid tiny homes in Minibuses.

While the company used digital tools such as 3D CAD software to design and develop its units, a key process of the manufacturer, CNC machining and laser etching of furniture and structural parts, was outsourced.

This reliance on sub-contracting limited production capacity to 11 vehicles in a year. Recognising the need to increase production, grow and innovate, Crozier contacted Made Smarter.

A digital transformation workshop analyses the company's product, process and people, identifying potential technologies to overcome its challenges and realise opportunities, and a digital roadmap to adopting those solutions.

The Solution

With the help of a £20,000 grant from Made Smarter, Crozier Campers was able to invest in vital process control hardware and design software.

The Apollo 1325 CNC will allow for the precision cutting, milling and drilling of sheet wood, metal and plastic.

The machinery is integrated with Autodesk Fusion 360, a cloud-based CAD, CAM, CAE, and PCB software platform.

The Benefits

The solution has been transformational.

Build times have reduced from eight weeks to seven - a 12.5% productivity increase. This is forecast to enable the manufacture of an additional two units per year initially, with a view to ramping up production to 17 units within three years.

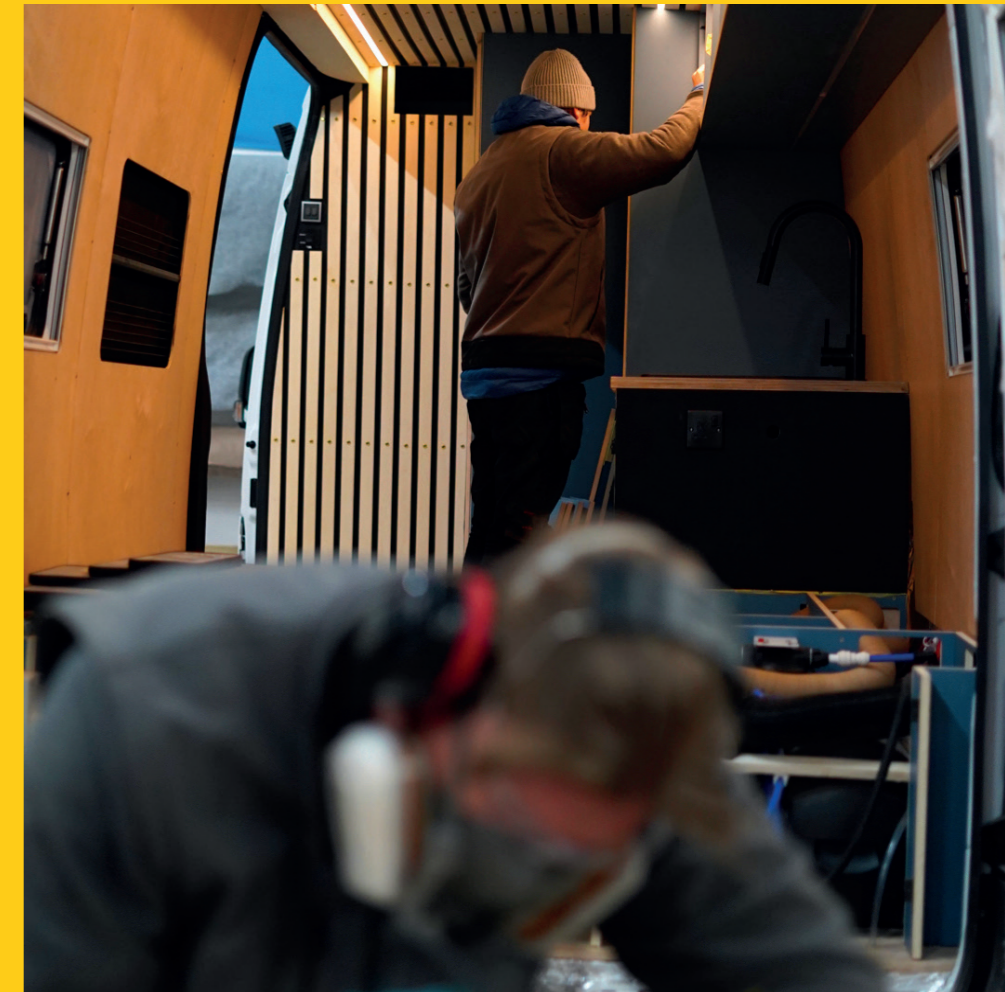
Bringing the operation in-house is forecast to increase turnover and profits on units by 25%.

Conor said: "This project will also significantly reduce our build time schedules and allow us to produce units to an improved timescale. We have often been reliant on third party companies and their time schedules, this will no longer be an issue. This allows us to have a far greater control over our production line and reduce the risk for us as a business."

The investment has led to a new commercial partnership with Mercedes Benz. As an accredited Mercedes Body Builder, Crozier will be fitting out up to 15 Sprinter vans with a specific layout with customisation options.

The growth opportunity has enabled Crozier to create a new role in the production team and upskill existing staff with digital manufacturing methods.

Automation will reduce the need for hand working and finishing, freeing up staff for more valuable roles and to increase productivity.



The solution has unlocked the company's R&D capacity as it is now able to prototype new ideas and expand into producing components.

With more capacity, the business has been able to develop social media content to promote its range. This has resulted in a surge of enquiries globally, fuelling the need to expand the team and potential move into a new larger factory.

Crozier is committed to reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2027. It recycles all its waste and 0% waste goes to landfill, all of it gets recycled or turned into biofuel. The business also pledges to plant 50 trees per unit sold.

The technology nesting software enables the business to reduce wood waste which is used to create biofuels and donate to local woodworkers and artists.

The Future

Crozier also believes that it can use the technology to develop components for a wide range of vehicles including canal boats, container homes and overlanding vehicles.

Conor added: "The nature of our business means we have to ensure we are constantly evolving and innovating to remain at the top of our sector."

“Made Smarter's support has accelerated us years ahead and changed our business forever.”

Conor Crozier
Founder of Crozier Campers

