

Centre for Knowledge Transfer

Project Snapshot

Company: Ripmax
Business: Manufacturer and distributor of radio controlled models.
Project: To develop an e-commerce system and software-based customer relationship management system.

Manufacturing and Engineering Big Boys Toys!

For those of us that have never grown out of playing with model cars and planes, visiting Ripmax was a unique and highly entertaining experience. These specialist 'toys' are seriously advanced pieces of engineering technology from fully aerobatic model helicopters to rockets that can fly to over 800m! To keep up with the fierce demand for such products the team at Ripmax needed some advice from the specialists at LSBU to keep ahead of the game and meet the ever-increasing demand.

Although one of the largest distributors of radio control models in the UK, the current economic climate means Ripmax cannot afford to become complacent. "We are competing in a crowded market that is not expanding, therefore we need to up our game and work as efficiently as possible," comments Bob Petrie, Marketing Manager at Ripmax. "Efficiency equals profit and when our efficiency goes up so does our profit."

KTP Associate Yuliya Syzonenko developed Ripmax's first tailored mobile software application for the company's computer system. This programme enables buyers to browse and purchase over 14,000 stock items online, access information on stock levels, track their orders and see their account status at any time. "The idea is to be able to communicate with our customers 24 hours a day," states Yuliya.

A 2nd KTP Associate, Imran Bashir joined the Ripmax team shortly after Yuliya to build upon the e-commerce platform and develop a CRM tool for the company, meaning they can form even better relationships with their customers. This tool acts as a personalised system for each customer that can analyse buying patterns, make product recommendations and order in relevant stock. "Online information is now more accurate and up-to-date, particularly stock levels. In addition, many time-consuming manual processes will be eradicated as a result of the KTP project," explains Imran.

Efficiency levels continue to rise as Imran and Yuliya have integrated the in-store tills with their website so that operations in the shops are linked with what is happening online. "I created a retail portal that is linked with Microsoft Dynamics Ax, the programme we use for marketing, accounting and purchasing, and tailored the programme to meet our exact needs," said Imran.

LSBU Academic Mike Scott who has been instrumental in helping Imran in the field of e-commerce says "this is the perfect example of knowledge transfer. We achieved exactly what we set out to do, bridging the gap between academia and business."

Both Yuliya and Imran have been employed full time by Ripmax as IT Managers. "Having employed both Associates is a testament to how successful the project has been," praises Bob.

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