



CARLA TEWKESBURY

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> Adept chooses Lexel Managed Services to cure IT headache

Technology company Adept has found a way to get better value for its IT money. With expertise on tap, through Lexel Managed Services, risks are reduced and productivity is protected.

SUMMARY

For businesses that require a full IT skill set, but are unable to financially justify a complete in-house IT team, outsourcing IT management is increasingly becoming the best course of action. Auckland company Adept's experience illustrates why.

Adept is an innovative development and manufacturing company that produces a large portfolio of proprietary plastic products. The company began in a garage in 1969, when Murray Fenton started making the 'Adept Beef Clip', a product that is today distributed across the world and has sold more than a billion units. Fuelled by Kiwi ingenuity, the company has grown rapidly and today has around 100+ staff.

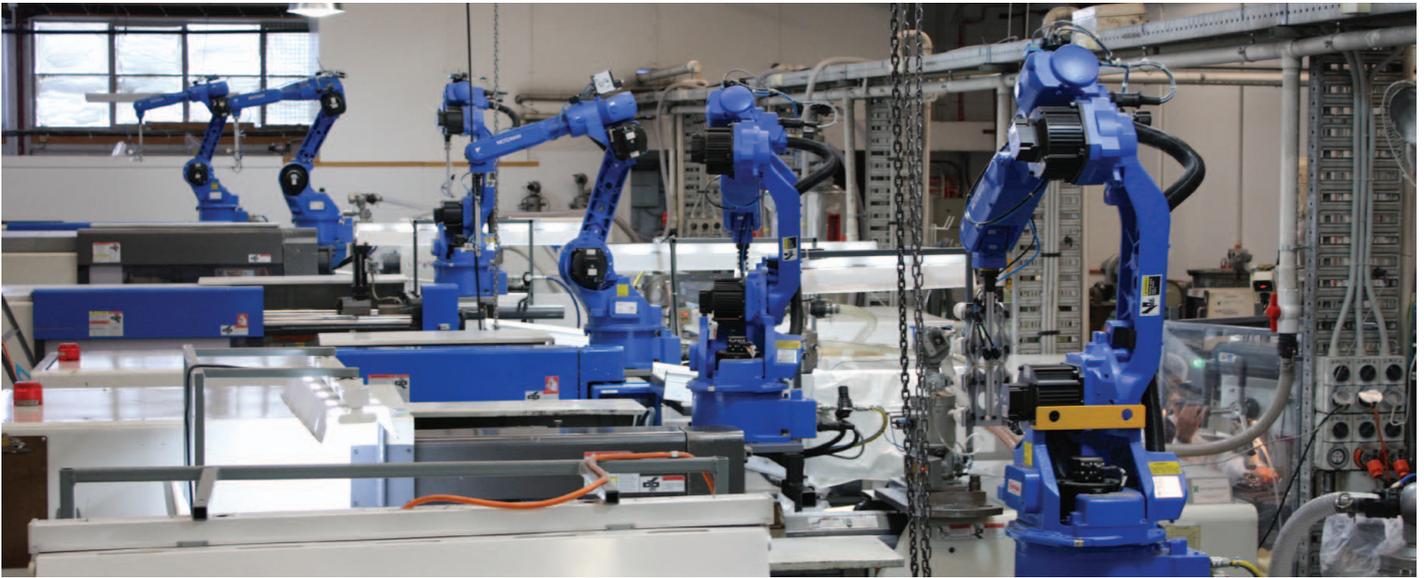
Until early this year, Adept's IT environment was managed by a single person, best described as a 'generalist.'

Carla Tewkesbury, General Manager at Adept, talks about the risks of a 'one man band' IT department.

"When you have one person managing your IT, they can't know everything. Our IT environment has become increasingly complex - you've got to think about the desktops and support for users, then in the background all the servers and software engineering. One person can't know or do it all. And when the IT person gets sick or takes a holiday, the company is really exposed."

Adept recognised the need to change IT management tactics at the same time that Lexel was finishing a refresh of the company's server infrastructure, which involved moving to a virtual server platform.

"We were very impressed with Lexel and how they had managed the infrastructure update. It made sense to start using their Managed Services – we'd get all the skill-sets we required from a provider that we trusted" said Carla.



THE CHALLENGE

Adept requested a proposal for managed services from Lexel that would address all end-user and system support for the company's 100+ staff. Adept's specialised business applications, including Microsoft Dynamics ERP, are supported by the relevant software providers. However, as their IT provider, Lexel would need to liaise with the various providers to ensure the infrastructure was supporting their applications adequately.

In moving away from the single IT person model, Adept wanted to achieve a best practice environment – not necessarily cheaper, but definitely 'more value for money.' In addition, risk mitigation and increased productivity were the expected business benefits.

In Carla's words: "We'd spent a lot of money upgrading to the virtual server platform and we recognised that our support also required an overhaul. We're not big enough to employ an entire IT team - that's where the idea of managed services came in."

LEXEL'S SOLUTION

Taking over the day-to-day management of Adept's core IT environment didn't present Lexel with any difficulties. Noel Simpson, CEO of Lexel, explains: "We have four core capabilities that combine to provide the ideal outsourced IT solution. This is then overlaid with our Service Delivery Management that seamlessly ties it all together"

Lexel's four core capabilities in this area include:

- **Professional Services:** a team that provides high-end project design, implementation, and integration consulting.
- **Managed Services:** a team providing proactive monitoring and remote support from Lexel's headquarters.

- **Helpdesk:** a team which acts as a first point of contact for end user queries and straightforward fixes, and a team that can escalate to Professional Services, Managed Services, or external partners as required.
- **Field Service Engineers:** a team delivering on-site services as required, and includes coverage across NZ and Australia.

Distinct from many other smaller managed service providers, Lexel offers an optional Service Delivery Manager ('SDM') service. Core SDM functions include:

- **Communication:** The SDM is responsible to facilitate communication and link all parties of the solution together.
- **Relationship:** The client will use the SDM as the primary point of contact for any service contract queries or escalations.
- **Identifying Problems:** The SDM will proactively look at issues which arise, research root causes, and make recommendations to resolve repetitive incidents which occur.
- **Programme Management:** The SDM is responsible to ensure that multiple projects or services which are being delivered concurrently are reviewed at a high level.
- **Reporting and Reviews:** The SDM is tasked with reporting on the overall service deliverables, and ensuring core metrics and quality is delivered to the client.

At Adept's request, Lexel took this core service a step further by providing a regular on-site engineer for two half-days (Tuesday and Thursday) every week. This ensured strong communication between Lexel and Adept's end users, and was considered particularly important during initial handover.

Lexel's deliverables to Adept were:

- Full ownership of Adept's core IT systems
- Proactive, proven and responsive IT support solution

- Introduction and maintaining industry best practice ITIL process and procedures
- Providing a structured incident logging, escalation and resolution system
- Providing end users direct access to helpdesk support, with a focus on high availability and fast issue resolution
- On-site engineer for two half-days every week
- Proactive monitoring and alerting of key business systems and processes
- Co-ordinated management of 3rd party vendors and contractors

CONCLUSION

Carla Tewkesbury reports that the move to Managed Services has been an outright success. Additionally, Carla says that Lexel is doing a great job of supporting Adept's relationship with Intergen, who provide the company's ERP solution.

“We have a quality IT offering now – something we didn't have before. The risk of downtime is greatly reduced and IT is no longer a headache.

“Murray was particularly concerned about how exposed we were when the IT person went on leave or got sick. We had no support backup. But now the business is on a strong IT platform” said Carla.

While direct costs are about the same as before, because Adept requested an on-site engineer, Carla says that the company is getting far more value for its money. She also reports that Adept's managing director Murray Fenton is very pleased with the change.



Murray Fenton, Managing Director, Adept.

KEY BENEFITS OF MANAGED SERVICES

- Outsourcing IT management lets the business focus on core business
- Enables enterprise class best practice and systems to customers that otherwise wouldn't have access to such
- Every skill set required for best practice IT system management is available
- Outsourcing solutions are flexible and can be tailored to meet individual needs
- A healthier IT environment supports improved productivity and user satisfaction
- Issues can be addressed before they require escalation
- Multi-level support ensures that the right level of support expertise can be accessed quickly
- There are no risks associated with people taking leave
- There is scope to reduce direct and indirect costs
- Costs are predictable, making it easier to set budgets

Lexel is a New Zealand owned provider of ICT services and solutions to business. We focus on maximising business performance by using industry leading expertise and solutions to streamline IT infrastructure. Twenty-two years in the IT business, Lexel is a known and trusted partner.

We specialise in providing solution consulting, infrastructure design, implementation, project management, outsourcing, support services and procurement. To allow us to deliver this wide range of services, Lexel Systems has partnered with the main technology providers in New Zealand and we have secured the highest level of certifications possible with each of these partners.