

EPICOR

Hacel Lighting



Company Facts

Overview

- **Location:** United Kingdom
- **Industry:** Electronics and High Tech Manufacturing
- **Established in** 1980
- **Website:** www.hacel.co.uk

Success Highlights

Business Challenges

- Previous on-premise updates took 2-3 years of planning, were expensive and required 30-40 days of consultant support
- Hardware refreshes required every few years to support latest operating system and Middleware software

Solution

- Epicor Kinetic & Mobile Warehouse

Benefits

- Hacel Lighting resource can focus on business initiatives rather than IT operations
- Ease of automatic updates since moving to the cloud, saving expenditure of consultancy fees

Overview of Hacel Lighting

Hacel Lighting, established in 1980, are a major independent lighting manufacturer based in the Northeast of the UK. Hacel is a design-driven company, committed to the development and manufacture of high-quality, energy-efficient lighting products for many sectors including Automotive, Retail, Commercial and Architectural.

They have a deserved reputation for service, flexibility, and delivery with a large high quality product range. In addition to the design and supply of luminaires, Hacel has a dedicated team that will custom design lighting schemes for entire buildings or projects to assist end users around the UK to meet their energy, climate, and carbon reduction targets. The many leading high street names who choose Hacel Lighting is true a testament to the quality and performance of their products.

Over 90% of their business comes from UK-based customers, with the remaining from Europe and rest of the world. Their entire range of products is designed and manufactured in the UK at their 40,000 sq. ft purpose-built facility in Newcastle.

Challenges with their on-premise systems

Hacel Lighting has been an Epicor Vantage customer since 2006. Chris Neal, their Financial Controller and Company Secretary, who also is responsible for IT, HR, Procurement and Logistics, and has been at Hacel Lighting since 2012, has seen several versions of Epicor ERP software during his time at Hacel. He had overseen the migration from Epicor Vantage 8 to Epicor 9 to Epicor 10 (all on-premise systems). These migrations to latest releases needed to be planned every 2 to 3 years and were expensive - each taking 30 to 40 days of consultant's time. While Chris had deliberately removed customizations, so future migrations were less consulting intensive, he still needed to budget for hardware refreshes every few years to ensure their inhouse servers could support the latest operating systems and middleware software required to run Epicor®.

Upgrade to Epicor Kinetic in the Cloud

Hacel had initiated a strategy to move most of their IT applications and systems to the cloud over time, so company resources could be focused on core business initiatives rather

than on IT operations. As a part of that strategy, in early 2020 they decided to upgrade their Epicor ERP version 10 to Epicor Cloud, Kinetic. Since their Epicor 10 implementation had no customizations, the move to Kinetic was relatively easy and they were live within 2.5 months in March 2020. Most of this time was spent on planning the upgrade, as well as securing and implementing parallel internet connectivity from two different suppliers to ensure they had an always-on cloud solution, in case of disruption at one vendor.

How Kinetic has helped Hacer Lighting

Just like any other cloud solution, their Kinetic applications automatically get upgraded when a new update is released, saving Hacer money that would otherwise have been spent on external consultant fees to support upgrades. Since Kinetic runs on Epicor Cloud, Hacer Lighting has also avoided the need for future investments in hardware refreshes, middleware and security software. This enables them to redirect that spend on core strategic initiatives rather than IT upgrades.

Upgrading to Kinetic has also enabled Hacer Lighting to take advantage of new capabilities in Kinetic. For example, Kinetic comes with RESTful APIs, which allow Hacer Lighting to report on daily operational activities and metrics in different sections of the factory. Hacer achieves this by using the APIs to pull data directly from the system into Excel and publishing it to users across the factory.

Chris elaborated that “the factory reporting has come on leaps and bounds” since the upgrade to Kinetic. “Kinetic is by far the best I have seen in its integration with Microsoft Products such as Excel and Outlook. It’s ability to email and send out informative messages to users and configure those processes is very good for any manufacturing business”.

“I was staggered at how easy it was to move to cloud. The actual upgrade from Epicor 10 to Kinetic took only a few hours, which speaks volumes about the quality of Epicor’s migration tools. Having no true customizations in Epicor 10 also simplified the upgrade process for us”.

Chris Neal, Financial Controller and Company Secretary at Hacer Lighting

“Epicor Kinetic is far more capable than what we will need in the business for the next five years. We have a list of capabilities we are gradually incorporating in our environment and the limiting factor is our management. We are pushing as fast as we can”.

Chris Neal, Financial Controller and Company Secretary at Hacer Lighting

Some of his team members have adopted the new configurable UI and are benefitting from its ability to easily customize the interface without affecting future upgradability. Hacer Lighting also deployed the Epicor Mobile Warehouse capability since going Live, which has notably reduced the lost time while booking production for workers on the assembly line and improved data accuracy.

Most software companies tend to fix most reported bugs in the next update of their software. As a Kinetic customer, Hacer Lighting is always current on the latest update, so they see far fewer product bugs now, than in the past when they were running older

versions in an on-premise environment. “Our move to Kinetic is already paying dividends for us. My users and I aren’t wasting our time filing and tracking responses to software bugs, as compared to our on-premise days”, said Chris Neal.

Hacer is convinced that Kinetic is the right choice for them both, today and in the future. Chris goes on to say that “Epicor is by far the best [ERP] I’ve ever worked with” and with the move to Kinetic, he believes that Hacer is better positioned to invest their resources in what matters the most for their business, while operationally simplifying their IT environment.

EPICOR

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