**Knowledge Transfer Partnerships**

**KTP BENEFITS**
Knowledge Transfer Partnerships are designed to benefit everyone involved:

- Businesses will acquire new knowledge and expertise
- KTP Associates will gain business-based experience and personal development opportunities
- University, college or research organisation will bring their experience to enhance the business relevance of their research and teaching

A DTI Business Support Solution

---

**CROFT ENGINEERING SERVICES**

**ENGINEERING BENEFITS THROUGH KTP**

**ABOUT THIS CASE STUDY**
CROFT ENGINEERING SERVICES ENJOYED A SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION WITH LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY (LJMU) IN THIS KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER PARTNERSHIP (KTP). THE AIM WAS TO ESTABLISH FORMAL BUSINESS METHODS FOR THE COMPANY. THIS WAS TO BE ACHIEVED BY AUDITING KEY BUSINESS AND INFORMATION PROCESSES, IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS (INCLUDING COMPUTER SYSTEMS) AND STRUCTURING AND RE-DESIGNING THESE PROCESSES.

**ABOUT THE SPONSOR**
The Department for Trade and Industry (DTI) drives the ambition of ‘Prosperity for All’ by working to create the best environment for business success in the UK. The DTI helps people and companies become more productive by promoting enterprise, innovation and creativity.

**FAST FACTS**

- KTP facilitated a streamlined, modern culture
- Integrated Business Information Systems that suit the company
- Quicker turnaround times for products to reach customers
- Repeat business and larger orders won
- New case studies, teaching materials and papers for the University
- Associate offered post within the company

---

**The Company**

Croft Engineering Services is a small to medium-sized enterprise (SME) based in Warrington which has been trading for over 18 years. It manufactures wire mesh, perforated plate and expanded metal filters in various forms. In particular, the company specialises in cones, cylinders, baskets and screens which can be produced in stainless steel, mild steel, brass, metal alloys and synthetic materials.

“The University has been extremely supportive throughout this project and we have had regular contact with Jim Sheehan the academic consultant. He has been heavily involved with monitoring Karen’s work programme and has also advised us on many other matters related to developing the company.”

Neil Burns, Partner, Croft Engineering Services

**ABOUT THE PROJECT**
Croft Engineering Services is a family-run enterprise which has evolved organically since it was set up and with little input from external sources. Recognising this, the company looked to implement modern business systems and structures to help it maximise its potential for getting new products to market. To achieve this, Croft looked to LJMU for collaboration on a KTP project.
**The Associate**

"This KTP has proved an invaluable platform to my career and my MBA. In addition to the technical work, the diversity of tasks provided exposure to business areas that I would not have otherwise had the opportunity to get involved with."

Karen Austin, KTP Associate

**BENEFITS**

The Associate ran an extensive review of organisational procedures and then tailored the associated building of information systems to fit the business. She used process maps to design, build and implement new sales and purchasing systems and then developed training skills by teaching staff how to use them. She learnt to be resilient as, initially, the culture was resistant to change.

In addition, the Associate has been able to progress her professional and academic status by undertaking an MBA. She has also had experience of marketing and promotional activities by applying and winning various national business and research awards for the company.

- KTP has provided academic, personal and career development
- Experience of transferring theoretical concepts into a commercial setting
- Offered the post of Business Developer with Croft
- KTP provided skills and experience to win new position as IT Project Manager
- Further academic progress from pursuing an MBA

**The Academic Partner**

"Nothing was routine. The team worked closely to develop new methods of generating effective organisational change. The spotlight was continuously on how well my professional judgements performed in the ‘real world’ - scary but great fun."

Jim Sheehan, Senior Lecturer, School of Business Information, Liverpool John Moores University

**BENEFITS**

This KTP provided an additional perspective on the research of LJMU into issues of business analysis and change management. Croft showed the importance of having information based systems of management rather than an intuitive approach when moving from small batch manufacturing to large, multi-million part production runs.

The University has built on its existing work into adapting analytical tools usually used for large companies to facilitate progress in SMEs. The School of Business Information has benefited from research papers based on the KTP project. In addition, the project has initiated new case study material and teaching resources.

- Greater experience of issues of business analysis and change management
- Numerous academic papers have been prepared for conference
- KTP has generated course material and case studies
- Enhanced promotion of LJMU capabilities through press promotion of KTP