

EDA Data Services talks to KCS



Richard Appleton, GM at EDA Data Services, talks to KCS about the impact of digitalisation and ecommerce on electrical wholesalers



The rise of digitalisation: what it means for wholesalers

All the discussion around digitalisation of the electrotechnical sector, but what does it really mean for your business? If you think digitalisation only means a fully-functioning ecommerce website that will take months to develop, will soak up your team's time – if indeed you have digital in-house expertise – and your cash too, not so.

Digitalisation is a much broader term that is as much about using digital systems to improve processes and automate your business, minimising paperwork and giving you and your team the freedom to concentrate on developing your existing customers and finding new ones.

B2C leads B2B

The pandemic has shown us how much we depend on the convenience of researching and buying goods and services online. It is something that we all take for granted in our personal lives, why wouldn't we expect the same in business?

Perhaps you are concerned that if your customers don't come into your trade counter that they won't buy from you at all. By embracing digitalisation, you are unlocking the potential of a multi-channel sales infrastructure: giving your existing customers a choice of how they buy from you.

Those who need to come into the trade counter to ask for advice and information will continue to do so, but an automated ecommerce or click and collect service will give them out-of-hours options and it will open up your business to new customers. And, however loyal your current customers are, every business needs to continually acquire new ones.

Don't reinvent the wheel

ecommerce apps and web shops are available out of the box and can be up and running in days. You just need to do some research and get the right option for your business. That said, all ecommerce solutions need reliable, high quality manufacturers' product data so your customers can search, filter, and buy the right product for the job.



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Richard Appleton, General Manager, [EDA Data Services](#)

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You do not need to harness all that data yourself from scratch. Instead, you can access a data pool, such as EDATA, which works with manufacturers to create a hub of data in one location that you can pull through to your systems. EDATA is based around the ETIM standard for technical product data ensuring all manufacturers' product data is consistent.

Where to go for free advice

If your business is a member of the Electrical Distributors' Association (EDA) you are welcome to call me and my team for advice. We have also produced a series of practical White Papers, designed to help demystify digitalisation topics. "Effective ecommerce: 3 product data essentials for electrical wholesalers" is a good start but there are two other titles too, which would be very useful background reading. Visit www.eda.org.uk and search White Papers.

The EDA has published a number of articles on digital trends and predictions and we also have an annual Digitalisation Forum which is free to attend. The next one is scheduled for Wednesday 1 December 2021 and you can download the presentations from the 2020 forum from our website. All this information and more is available from www.eda.org.uk

In conclusion, do not be afraid of digitalisation. You don't have to try to compete with Amazon in order to succeed. What wholesalers can do is to take that amazing knowledge of electrotechnical products which cannot be replicated by any website - and that essential human touch - and enrich that service with digital systems that improve efficiency and give your customers choice.

That's a powerful and winning formula.

About Kerridge Commercial Systems (KCS)

KCS provides advanced, fully integrated business systems, installation and support services for the manufacturing, wholesale and distributive markets. The company has over 40 years of extensive knowledge and experience of working with wholesalers, distributors and manufacturers across many sectors. The company's class leading solutions are functionally rich and highly flexible.

The KCS product solution set has a track record of delivering wide-ranging benefits including greater operational efficiency, cost savings and resource and asset utilisation, together with real-time information for management decision making.

Contact KCS

UK +44 (0) 1488 662 000

Ireland +353 (0)1 469 3375

hello@kerridgecs.com

www.kerridgecs.com