

TECHNOLOGY - MOVING WITH THE TIMES



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One of the most rewarding changes a company can make is the embracing of new technology. Wherever I go I cannot help but be impressed when I see new technology being used and used effectively.

The current rate of change in technology makes it almost impossible for a company to keep up to date.

But it is encouraging to see the growing number of people in the timber truss industry that are adapting and gaining real benefits from these developments.

A year or so ago I was travelling through Sydney with one of our local technical support people when he received a call from a customer with a software problem.

After accessing the situation, he hung up and asked me, as he was driving, to turn on his notebook.

By this time we were driving through the tunnel under Sydney Harbour. With the aid of his mobile phone we dialled into the customer's network using remote access software and were able to browse and copy files from the customer's network (about 25 kms away).

After just a few minutes we had downloaded a couple of files and fixed the customer's problem before we had emerged from the tunnel.

Further on down the road we received another call where a customer had an issue sending a document to his networked printer. Again this was fixed by remote communication.

Impressive! Who, a few years back, would have imagined this would ever be possible?

These above problems were rectified simply and efficiently using inexpensive tools that are readily available.

Without this technology, a site visit would have been required, which would have incurred additional travel costs and a significant delay in resolving the customers' problem.

The importance of adapting to new and appropriate technology cannot be under-estimated.

What now seems a lifetime ago, (but in reality was only



about 20 years), the humble fax machine made its debut onto the world stage.

At the time it was a revolutionary new means of communication giving companies speed and flexibility in data communication they had never had before.

Those who could see the obvious benefits adapted quickly but the real benefits were not possible until the fax was adopted universally.

Installing a fax was of little use unless the people you needed to communicate with also had a corresponding fax machine.

E-mail today is similar to the fax of 20

years ago. E-mail is an even more efficient means of communication allowing almost instant access to a wide group of people both inside and outside of your company.

Sending messages and attaching data files, drawings etc not only improves communication but also increases productivity.

E-mail however, is not used as much in our industry as in others for the same reason that initially inhibited the use of the fax.

There are still quite a number of businesses that have been slow to take up this technology, which considering that most plants have computers as part and parcel of their everyday operations, seems unusual.

E-mail is the modern method of communication. There are also cost savings to be had in adapting to this form of communication.

It's cheaper than a long distance phone call and large file attachments can be sent (no couriers required) to almost anywhere in the world. Utilising this new form of communication can save time and money.

Connecting to the internet and setting up an e-mail account is a relatively simple job using either the utilities provided by the Internet Service Provider or via the tools provided with most of the operating systems used today.

Good communication with your clients and suppliers is a must and a little time spent in setting up your e-mail account will be well rewarded.