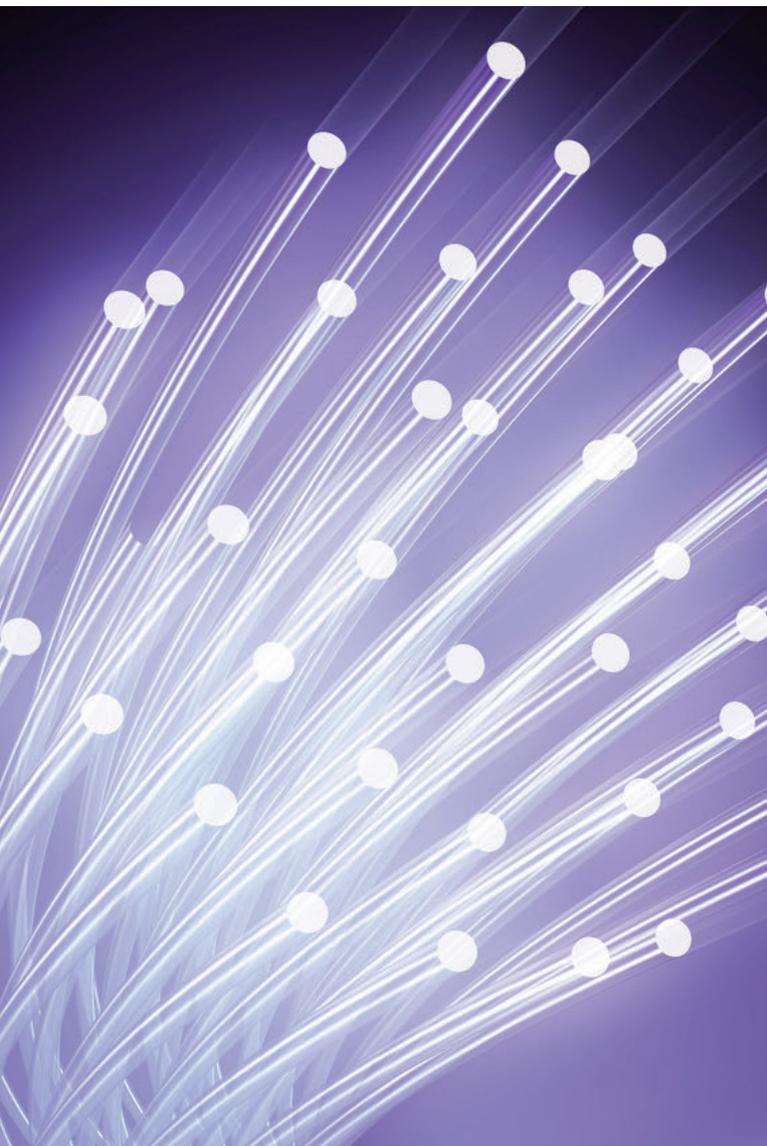




Crafting future success with superfast broadband



Craft ICT is a small IT company based in the rural village of Mundford, Norfolk. Born out of a desire to strike a better work-life balance, husband and wife team Andy and Val Hibbs have been growing the business together since 2004.

www.filemakerdatabases.co.uk/



The company offers databases in the cloud to customers around the world. From an exhibition company in South Africa to a firm offering cruises in Burma, Craft ICT helps other businesses manage their information needs.

All of this is done from their home office in the quiet but thriving rural village of Mundford. Previously the company's broadband speeds topped at around 4Mbps with less than 1Mbps upload speeds.

"Broadband is essential to our business. Our whole business model relies on it. We had a week without broadband once and we had to de-camp our business to a local restaurant to use their Wi-Fi. We just can't function without it."

"But whenever we wanted to complete software upgrades or download customer files we'd have to start it off and then we'd make a cup of coffee or in some cases set it to download or upload overnight because it would take so long," explained Andy Hibbs, Craft ICT's director.

High-speed fibre broadband arrived in Mundford thanks to the Better Broadband for Norfolk programme, a partnership between Norfolk County Council and BT.

"We were one of the first to sign up" said Andy. "And our broadband speeds rocketed to 60Mbps download speeds with 11Mbps upload. We knew it was exactly what we needed to make our business run more efficiently. What used to take hours can now be done in the blink of an eye."



“The need for local servers and numerous back-up discs has gone, we no longer have to own internal servers. Not only can we benefit from the hardware and electricity cost savings this brings, the “what-if” worry has gone too.

“Video conferencing is now seamless which allows us to keep in touch with our staff and customers around the world much more easily. It’s reduced our travel costs and therefore enabled us to offer a more cost-effective service to our customers.

“We would recommend the service to anyone. It didn’t cost us any more to upgrade to a fibre package and we saved money immediately. Fibre is essential for any small business – being able to store everything online enables you and your employees to work from anywhere – home or away. And moving office premises is considerably easier because you have far less to take with you!” concluded Andy.

“We can now re-think our business strategy and build it on a truly digital 21st century platform.”

Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP, Secretary of State for the Environment and member of a new government digital task force, met with businesses including Craft ICT when she visited Mundford, which is in her South West Norfolk constituency, to see the impact of superfast broadband on the village.



Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP, Secretary of State for the Environment and member of a new government digital task force meeting Andy Hibbs, Craft ICT.

“I’ve met businesses in Mundford who are making fantastic use of improved broadband – supplying clients in Brazil, Myanmar and the US. It’s for this reason that the roll out of superfast broadband is so important to the rural economy.”

Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP, Secretary of State for the Environment

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