

Business Weekly

R-R launches new data unit to boost business efficiency

DERBY engineering giant Rolls-Royce has launched a new data unit aimed at improving efficiency across its businesses.

The firm has created the unit, named R2 Data Labs, that will use analytics, artificial intelligence and machine learning to improve efficiency across its civil and defence aerospace, marine, nuclear and power systems businesses.

Derby is home to the firm's UK civil aerospace and nuclear divisions. The Data Labs will be based in the firm's Derby global headquarters, as well as several other locations.

Rolls-Royce says R2 Data Labs will develop applications that unlock design, manufacturing and operational efficiencies.

The firm's chief digital officer, Neil Crockett, said the model would deliver a "step change" in the capability of the company's data services and would enable it to work more closely with its customers.

He said: "R2 Data Labs will tap into expertise from across a wide data and analytics supply chain, building a diverse community of data innovators: including OEM partners, niche start-ups, academics, and a broad range of other trusted third-parties."

Last month, Rolls-Royce said it would work with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on building a new digital platform that will help it develop new products quicker – one of the main targets in chief executive Warren East's turnaround plan.

Mr Crockett said: "We see huge untapped potential for our customers to achieve better, more efficient operations through collaborating with Rolls-Royce in data innovation projects."

Co-op Funeralcare opens revamped branch in Ripley

A REVAMPED funeral home in a Derbyshire town has been officially opened.

Central England Co-operative Funeralcare has opened the doors to its refurbished branch in Nottingham Road, Ripley.

Funeral director Mark Worley said: "This is a very exciting time for my team and we are proud to be part of the community."

"Our first priority is to enhance memories and love for all of our families and we are very pleased to offer that at Central England Co-operative Funeralcare.

"We feel it reflects our commitment to providing excellent standards of care for our families during their time of bereavement.

"We will be hosting a special dedication day later in the year that will see a special blessing take place and members of the public invited to learn more about the home and my team.

"We look forward to seeing everyone on the day and showing them our new surroundings."

The investment in Ripley comes on the back of further development work at funeral homes in Swadlincote, Allenton and Heanor – resulting in a total of more than £300,000 being invested in the area during 2017.

A quantity surveyor's top day ... moving building materials then watching Grand Designs

MY WEEK

Jonathan Heath, director of Derby-based quantity surveyors Armsons.

MONDAY

I leave home in Belper about 7.45am. My job takes me all over the country, so I like to spend Monday mornings in the office, so I can plan my week.

I'm usually working on between five and 10 projects at any one time, so I hit the ground running and tackle the most difficult task first, which is normally anything cost-related.

Armsons have recently been appointed agents on behalf of O Heap & Sons, who are having a new unit at Westside Park, in Raynesway, so I go to the site office to chair a progress meeting. There are around 10 people in a small cabin, so it's a bit of a squeeze! Fortunately, everyone's at the top of their game and the project is running smoothly.

I leave the office around 5.30pm and head home to see what havoc has been wreaked by our new puppy, Digby, and our kitten, Pearl. We got them both about six months ago and so far, they're getting on OK!

It's all systems go at home as we're having an extension built at the moment. Some more materials were delivered while my wife, Ruth, and I were at work, so I spend an hour or so moving bucket loads to the back of the house, then collapse in front of the TV for an episode of Grand Designs.

TUESDAY

I start my day with some cost planning for a developer. Developers often want to know how much a project will cost before they commit to the land purchase, so I provide an indication of cost, so the client can assess the level of profit and expenditure the project will involve. Cost planning is a complex process and a whole series of abnormalities can change the overall cost, thus affecting profits, so it's essential to give the developer a comprehensive picture of all the variables.

After lunch we have a meeting with the directors and senior management team about the firm's marketing and business development. We're all so busy working on our own projects that

it's easy to overlook this side of the business, so we get together every month for an update on current activities.

WEDNESDAY

Armsons have been supporting Derby College for a number of years in relation to the Professional Construction Employer & Skills Academy. It's an early start at the Roundhouse, but it's nice to help the community and see some familiar faces.

It's 10 years since the Roundhouse project completed. It's in good order and we're proud to have been involved with it.

Afterwards, I'm in the office for an hour, then head out on a site visit to Birmingham with fellow director Sally Lewis. We're working on a Heritage Lottery-funded project for Ruskin Mill Land Trust, who are transforming the Grade II-listed Standard Works in Birmingham into a centre for young people with learning and behavioural difficulties (Argent College), a centre for interpreting

the heritage of the building and the surrounding area and a centre for social enterprise with a café/bakery, roof garden and makers workshops.

Armsons were awarded the dual role of cost consultants and project managers following a pre-qualification and tender process.

Ruth and I like to eat out once during the week, so tonight we walk down to Nonno's in Belper, which is a real favourite of ours.

THURSDAY

It's a really early start today as I'm off on the three hour plus journey to Busy Bees' latest nursery in Cheam, Surrey. Prior to its purchase by Busy Bees, Armsons worked for Treetops Nursery as project managers and cost consultants and have overseen their new-build and refurb projects from concept to completion.

This project involves the renovation of a dilapidated old barn into an 80-place nursery, which needs to be sympathetic to the environment. This will be a

flagship project and is scheduled to be completed at the end of November.

The business was sold to Busy Bees mid-project, which has resulted in some challenges, including some changes to the specification, and it has been our job to oversee and monitor these changes.

By the time I get home, I've had a 12-hour day, so I grab something to eat and relax with a beer.

FRIDAY

In the morning, we have a team meeting at our offices in Darley Abbey, discussing on-going projects and sharing ideas. We have been awarded a number of new exciting projects, so we are recruiting new surveying staff, which is our current focus.

We're a sponsor of Derbyshire County Cricket Club, so we head off to a business lunch. The guest speaker is triathlete Steve Judge, who delivers a truly inspiring talk about his journey from a near fatal car accident to becoming two times World Champion.

After a couple of hours back in the office, I leave around 4.30pm. There's just time for a quick change, then Ruth and I head over to a brass band concert in Darley Dale. It is a celebration evening for a friend of the family who has been playing for 70 years!

SATURDAY

On Saturdays during the summer, I normally play cricket and golf, but now the season's over, I have to focus my mind on our extension project. I spend most of the day lugging materials in a wheelbarrow from the front of the house to the back – good job it's not raining!

After a strenuous day, Ruth and I head off to Nottingham to meet my dad and his partner to see comedian Milton Jones. I'm a big fan – and he doesn't disappoint.

SUNDAY

There's no lie-in for me this morning – I am woken up first by the cat, then by the dog. In the morning we walk in Lathkill Dale, which is our favourite location. When we get home, I help Ruth prepare a Sunday roast for her side of the family.

Ruth's a teacher, so she spends the evening doing some prep for the week ahead and I do the same, catching-up on my e-mails ready for another challenging week.



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