

LCR4.0

Together for Manufacturing.



European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

# The Nursery Kitchen

Date: Winter 2018

Technologies: Systems Integration  
and Big Data

Sector: Catering

Primary partner: The  
Virtual Engineering Centre



**theNurseryKitchen**  
*hand made food for children's day nurseries*

## Background

The Nursery Kitchen provide prepared wholesome and home cooked meals for young children in day nurseries across the UK. These meals offer no added preservatives or additives and provide a healthy option for meal times.

The company understands that parents want the best for their children but busy nurseries can often mean staff can offer limited menus, and the control and management of ingredients become an unwanted stress. Allergen control is a critical issue for all food manufacturers and The Nursery Kitchen provides free meals from weaning through to primary school children and caters for all allergens and preferences.

## Approaching LCR 4.0

The Nursery Kitchen wanted to invest in new software which would allow them to digitalise their records from paper form. The company also envisioned investing in a new integrated system that would allow their growing customers to quickly and easily make food orders, using a simple web application.

The system would also allow the company to automate many of their existing factory floor and office administrative tasks while providing a solution for the tracking and control of allergens.

This would allow for The Nursery Kitchen to gain greater insight into their efficiencies, audibility and visibility of all meals and ingredients used, helping them to assess buying trends of their customers and even forecast their own buying of ingredients.

## Partner Support

The Virtual Engineering Centre (VEC) helped The Nursery Kitchen to evaluate their requirements and explore a number of potential solutions. The VEC worked with the company to understand their existing industrial processes, regulatory requirements and paper based processes in order to develop the design of a database template, setting out how the company could achieve their objectives.

The VEC was able to recommend a new work flow, providing an outline for the development of a custom built system with focus on an adaptable and scalable SQL database which would allow The Nursery Kitchens to better manage all of their data.

The VEC also validated the feasibility of using systems integration, using a snapshot of live operational data based on an average week of orders for The Nursery Kitchen.

## Results

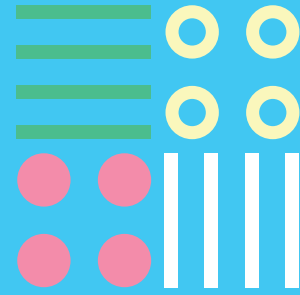
The VEC helped The Nursery Kitchen to validate their ideas and system requirements and become a better informed buyer with a greater in-depth understanding of not only the software available, but of their own capabilities, needs and technology available to them.

This new software and database will allow for the company to better manage and grow their orders moving forward, ensure increase growth opportunities and improve traceability records and management. The new software and digital database will also ensure greater connectivity throughout their business, ensuring processes move quickly and data can easily be retrieved as and when needed.

The company also predict that the use of this software will significantly reduce resources currently spent populating and correcting paper records and predict a growth of revenue by 14% over the next three years, adding over £621K to the GVA of the local economy. This is key resource saving can then be allocated more effectively elsewhere in the company, ensuring new orders are being met, are of high quality and are delivered successfully.

Katie Elliott, The Nursery Kitchen Director said:

“The Nursery Kitchen has always been committed to providing the best quality food to children and young people. Working with the VEC has helped the company to establish a plan to apply digital solutions in a way that will make the ordering process easier for our customers whilst providing a new level of efficiency, ingredient control and traceability that would not be possible with traditional paper processes.”



## Working to the Future

The Nursery Kitchen identified Wirral based enterprise software solutions provider the JGM Partnership, as an ideal commercial delivery partner for the development of a bespoke system informed by the findings of the VEC input. This allowed both The Nursery Kitchen and the JGM Partnership to de-risk and accelerate the development of commercial solutions.

The VEC then introduced The Nursery Kitchen and the JGM partnership to the Made Smarter UK Initiative and supported the two businesses in their grant application which they have since been granted. This additional funding support will help accelerate The Nursery Kitchen plans to further digitalise their operations.

At the time of support completion, The Nursery Kitchen serve over one million meals a year to nurseries across the nation. They foresee this increasing by 5%, reaching an additional 50,000 meals in which the new software will be crucial to the deliver for growth in customers.

The Nursery Kitchen are also planning for a new line of vegan meals for not only the child, but adult markets also. This will allow for additive-free home cooking to be brought to a wider market in a cost-effective manner by using new and modern digital technologies.

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0151 237 3903



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