



When Rittal faced a significant increase in demand for its electrical cabinets, the German headquartered manufacturer needed a trusted partner with the specialist machinery and expertise to quickly deliver without compromising on quality.

Rittal: boosting capacity

Rittal provides innovative solutions for industrial enclosures, power distribution, climate control and IT infrastructure as well as an extensive range of software tools and services.

Headquartered in Germany, Rittal employs more than 11,000 people worldwide. The firm operates 11 production sites across three continents, including a plant in Plymouth, which manufactures IT server racks and network enclosures for well-known OEM clients.

When orders for Rittal's electrical cabinets soared for a major social networking client, the Plymouth plant needed a supplier that could quickly turn around production of vertical panel uprights so it could swiftly boost capacity and meet the increase in demand.

Having worked with Rittal for over 20 years and because we had the specialist machinery required for the job, Rittal selected Aldermans to manufacture the vertical panels. The contract was initially to help Rittal ramp up production. However, this has since been extended to a longer contract and we now produce around 200 sets a week.

No compromise

Despite the pressure to quickly ramp up production to help Rittal meet the increase in demand, at Aldermans we never compromise on quality.

We invest in state of the art machinery and one of the reasons we were selected to help Rittal boost its production was because we had the right apparatus for the job. We use our Laser Punch Combination Machine and HFE Amada Press Brake to produce the cabinet panels.

We also pride ourselves on the skill of our workforce and their ability to overcome challenges. On Rittal's panels, although the fold is not complicated, the level of detail made repeatability and achieving dimensional accuracy more difficult. However, we easily overcame this by changing the fold sequence, which allowed us to keep critical dimensions well within drawing limits.

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Quality assured

During production, we had to adapt to a change in standards and new revisions and by doing so introduced an additional process to ensure products are scratch-free ready for the finishing process. The panels are a highly visible customer facing component, so further inspection is an essential part of the service we provide.

All our work is fully inspected to high standards and we back this up by providing Rittal with Production Part Approval Process (PPAP). We have also developed inspection gauges, which have increased efficiency for operator based checking and output.

Quick turnaround

We were able to turn around the initial request for samples in just days. We can now provide next day delivery for this product and are working alongside Rittal to feed their KANBAN call off system that will enable daily delivery.

Aldermans have also been able to supply additional vertical panels in a thicker gauge at short notice, providing a backup supply when essential maintenance was urgently required on Rittal's machinery.

Supply chain partnerships

Due to the timescale and the demand, the pressure was on to ensure Rittal's end customer deadlines weren't impacted. The reason we were able to help Rittal meet its obligations is down to the fantastic relationships we have with our own long-term suppliers. We sourced all our materials from Sebden and purchased tooling required for the job from Amada, two valued suppliers of our own.

Long term relationship

Both Rittal and Aldermans believe in firm business values that complement each other. One of Rittal's corporate values is a commitment to develop long term and meaningful relationships with its suppliers. This requires a strategic outlook based on competitive focused quality, delivery service, price and co-operative problem solving. Similarly, we believe in delivering to a consistently high standard and ensuring we meet all our commitments throughout every order; Rittal is no exception.

Rittal sales have grown from strength to strength, and the electrical cabinets represent a significant part of the company's sales, as well as opening doors into new markets. We are delighted to have played a key role in this success story.



“Rittal is very appreciative of the way Aldermans was able to quickly supply high quality products to enable us to meet our own customer deadlines.”

Neil Love, Rittal Supply Chain Director