

ASHLEY BATEUP – MYMESH



Ashley Bateup

The sector is going to explode' declares Ashley Bateup, CEO of Mymesh, describing the growing importance of smart buildings. Tucked away in an unassuming business centre near the busy A2 in Kent, Mymesh is a rapidly growing Gravesham-based company at the forefront of 'intelligent buildings'.

WHAT ARE INTELLIGENT BUILDINGS?

In short, intelligent buildings integrate technologies that automatically monitor and adapt their surroundings to meet users' needs. Such systems can manage lighting, emergency systems, occupancy, and climate control. 'It's the digital backbone of a building's infrastructure,' says Ashley, 'replacing traditional wired building management systems (BMS).' This streamlines operations, allowing caretakers and facilities managers to focus on solving issues rather than locating them whilst deriving significant energy savings and carbon abatement.

THE MESH SYSTEM

Mesh systems are not new — they work similarly to the World Wide Web (www). Mesh networks connect devices without a central control point, "ensuring no single point of failure." If a node, or device, fails, the system reroutes messages instantly. Mymesh is a wireless protocol that delivers large-scale and secure networks, transforming everyday items, like light fixtures and other building assets, into smart building technology.

LOCAL BEGINNINGS

The company's early projects started with lighting solutions for the local council, but have since evolved into comprehensive smart building systems. Bluewater Shopping Centre, for example, operates over 15,000 Mymesh-enabled devices, generating more than six million data points per month whilst delivering energy savings of more than 65% across the car park and back-of-house areas.



PHOTO Mymesh

Mymesh devices are highly secure, with encryption built in from the point of the manufacturer, and they change security keys 10 times per second across each device in the mesh. Although the system collects vast data on building operations, it ensures privacy. "It knows a car is parked, then leaves, but not the make or owner," explains Ashley. 'The same with shoppers — it knows how many people are on a stairwell, but not who they are.' Ashley emphasises that while Mymesh optimises operations at Bluewater, 'the data always belongs to the client.'

A GROWING BUSINESS

Mymesh was originally developed through an EU-funded academic research programme in the Netherlands. Today, the company operates in the UK and the Netherlands, employing eight people in the UK and forty in the Netherlands, with rapid expansion underway. Ashley attributes the company's growth to several factors, including increasing statutory requirements, rising energy prices, and environmental concerns. 'Climate change is affecting everything we do,' he notes. Mymesh helps reduce energy consumption and emissions in large commercial spaces by driving sustainability and extending asset life through its wireless systems.

CHANGING PRIORITIES

Recalling his time working with Rolls Royce, Ashley explains, "In 2012, Rolls Royce cared more about data than energy use, but now, with pressures from climate change and rising energy costs, demand for smart building technologies is paramount." At the time of writing, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust has awarded Mymesh one of its largest contracts



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to date, specifying that the hospital's lighting and emergency lighting systems are to be upgraded to full wireless control and monitoring.

STAYING LOCAL

Ashley, who has lived in Gravesham for 30 years, founded the UK branch of Mymesh after a long career in the Ministry of Defence. 'I've always been passionate about keeping things local,' he says, explaining his choice to base Mymesh in Gravesham. However, finding skilled workers remains challenging, raising concerns about whether current educational curricula align with future business needs.

THE FUTURE

As buildings become increasingly connected, Mymesh's technology intends to play a crucial role in replacing outdated systems and creating data-driven, efficient environments. Looking ahead, Ashley predicts that demand for smart building technologies will 'skyrocket over the next decade.' Mymesh is positioning itself as a key player in the sector, offering scalable, secure systems that will transform how we all interact with buildings in the future. ■

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