

# UK ecommerce giant opens google style £3.5m office

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EKM opens purpose-built, £3.5m office

EKM, the award-winning software company, has moved into its new 23,500 sq ft head office, positioning the company for significant growth.

Located in Preston, Lancashire, the new premises are a culmination of almost four years of designing, planning and construction and represents a £3.5m, self-financed investment for EKM.com (<https://www.ekm.com/>)

The headquarters have been custom-built and include a raft of state-of-the-art office technology, an expansive kitchen, rest-and-relaxation area, training and presentation auditorium - and a soon to be infamous slide reaching three stories.

There's also a floor which will soon house a gym, and a fully-equipped auditorium to be used for training seminars and which will be available to hire to other businesses.

Marc McKeown, head of business development, explained the growth that spurred the move: "EKM has grown a lot in the last 18 months. We restructured our offering to introduce new service level tiers, so that both a small, new-start business and a million-pound operation can both receive the kind of support they need.

"As well as drawing in new customers, we have very good client retention rates. Working online can be daunting for a lot of businesses, but they know they can ring us up and we're their comfort blanket."

Marc added: "These new offices help show off what we're about, it shows that we're a serious contender in the ecommerce market. Our goal now is to keep growing, adding new features for our customers, to keep being the best we can be and to keep evolving."

EKM's new home currently houses its 85 employees, who have relocated from much smaller offices in nearby Leyland and Darwen. It has a total capacity for more than 250 team member.

"These are world-class facilities for our world-class team," said EKM founder Antony Chesworth. "We've taken inspiration from Google and Facebook, because we want people to think of us in those terms."

A key objective of the development was to make work enjoyable, says Antony.

"{{Business doesn't have to be boring. We've got a huge slide, because you can't go down it without a big smile on your face.

"If your team love what they do, they'll keep doing it and get really good at it.}}

Sharon Snape, of Blackburn-based Altitude Interiors, was one of the creative minds behind the interior design.

“The brief was to make this the coolest workplace in Lancashire,” said Sharon, “and I think we’ve achieved that!”

Altitude has previously worked on projects for Guardian Pensions and Handelsbanken.

“We’ve always done something that’s a bit different, a bit quirky. At EKM there’s a woodland theme downstairs and a more industrial look, with exposed lighting and trunking upstairs.

“The common theme is bringing people together, so there’s lots of open spaces and glass partitions.”

Sharon added: “A nice workplace improves productivity, it makes people want to be here. This building was designed this with EKM’s team in mind, it’s all for them.”

The new office was officially launched with a family fun day, including an afternoon of beautiful summer sun. Around 150 employees and their families enjoyed a mouth-watering barbecue, a tour of the facilities and children enjoyed a bouncy castle, miniature golf and face-painting.

Notes to editor: EKM.com was the world's first ecommerce platform started by Antony Chesworth from his bedroom in Burnley, Lancashire in 2002. It has grown organically to become the UK's largest ecommerce platform powering one out of every five online shops in the UK.

Over half a billion pounds per year goes through EKM retailer stores.

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