

# CASE STUDY



## Creating Innovative Solutions

### Kemin Industries Builds with Technology in Mind

*Des Moines, Iowa*

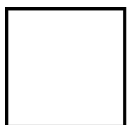
In 2013, Kemin Industries built a new headquarters in Des Moines, Iowa, providing collaboration space for hundreds of employees. With the continued growth of the global business and the addition of more employees, the need for improved audiovisual and information technology (AV/IT) was increasing rapidly. It became apparent that Kemin needed to improve and update its AV/IT system to better serve and connect employees in Des Moines, and around the world.

"We realized we needed to update and create systems that better served our employees and would decrease the need for IT support and disruptions throughout the day," says Joe Blackford, worldwide IT director at Kemin. "We saw this as an opportunity to really optimize our AV systems, including our conference room designs."

When the proposal of creating a 90,000-square-foot global corporate headquarters arose, Kemin was determined to improve AV/IT services at the new building. At first, Kemin believed that a classic meeting room design would resolve their issues. Then, thanks to an early partnership with Mechdyne Corporation, Kemin leadership realized that what it currently had wasn't working as well.

#### Objectives

- Create a tailored solution to deliver long-term ROI
- Consider the user experience, long-term company goals, and optimization planning to experience greater technology success and a lower total cost of ownership
- Maximize results, reduce cost, and improve efficiencies



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But, if employees felt comfortable and confident using the audiovisual equipment, Kemin could save money and create a positive user experience for team members allowing them to communicate more effectively.

## Matching Technology to Users

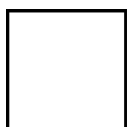
Today's new buildings tend to include elements of unique architecture and the newest technology available on the market. Unfortunately, many times this "newest technology is the best technology" strategy doesn't work well for a long-term vision without careful consideration. When leaders don't make deliberate technology decisions, employees can struggle in their workflows, feel intimidated by unfamiliar solutions, or avoid technology altogether. In addition, technology may not be optimal for the collaboration space or may clash with architecture choices.

Finding the best solutions for all these options doesn't come without critical analysis, an agile

approach, and some creative thinking. In the summer of 2016, Kemin partnered with Mechdyne to pilot workflow studies and develop an effective technology roadmap. The partnership was rooted in a highly consultative and adaptable approach.

First, Mechdyne analyzed employees' workflows and collaboration. The analysis would allow Mechdyne to select the best solutions for the needs at Kemin. When designing their solution, Mechdyne kept their focus on an overall technology plan that would:

- Enable immediate success upon moving into the new building's 66 private offices, 11 conference rooms, two training rooms, a board room, and miscellaneous collaboration areas
- Provide continued benefits for the present and in the future
- Retain flexibility and scalability as company goals and workflows evolve over time





"It's easy to get caught up thinking about the latest and greatest in technology," says James Gruening, Mechdyne senior vice president. "The Kemin team focused on the bigger picture and what they wanted to accomplish first. That allows us to design a technology solution together that enables them to achieve their goals."

## Analyzing Workflows to Prepare for Success

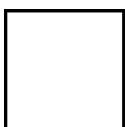
Mechdyne began by embedding a team within Kemin to better understand workflows and technology frustrations in their primary conference room. Mechdyne's teammates observed meetings and collaboration sessions, interviewed key "power users", and tested technology capabilities. In a series of checkpoints, Kemin reviewed Mechdyne's discoveries and drafted project expectations for the Mechdyne team to meet.

Mechdyne's teammates worked with Kemin employees to get a deeper understanding of

technology likes and dislikes, desired changes, and internal workflows. Only then could Mechdyne design the most effective solution possible. To test how the users would react to the technology, Mechdyne installed a trial solution in a primary conference room at Kemin. Together, Mechdyne and Kemin observed employee reactions and gathered their feedback to adjust the design until it was the best possible solution for Kemin employees. Kemin was now officially primed for immediate success in the new building.

## The Conference Room of the Future

The conference room design was inspired by future-thinking technologies but driven by Kemin users. Employees worked most efficiently and comfortably with their laptops above all other technology options. In the spirit of simplicity, Mechdyne designed straightforward connectivity and display capabilities.





A unique, automatic smart switching and routing software enabled the room to intelligently detect how and what a user wanted to present.

In what Mechdyne refers to as “The Conference Room of the Future,” users don’t have to take multiple steps to connect to displays. Instead, the conference room automatically presents the correct source. Through custom coding, Kemin users:

- Access their business directory information from the touch panel control systems
- Simply and intuitively utilize room displays
- Use current software with up-to-date technology

## Driving Efficiencies in the New Headquarters

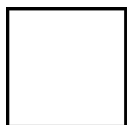
The Mechdyne and Kemin collaboration resulted in a solution that was ultimately best for the employees. In contrast with the old rooms that

required almost daily user support from IT, the new conference rooms generate near-zero help requests. Users are more comfortable and confident working with the new technology, and leadership has experienced increased employee engagement and satisfaction with the technology.

“We’ve worked with numerous vendors all over the world, and our team said that working with Mechdyne has been a great and effective experience in meeting our AV needs,” says Dr. Chris Nelson, President and CEO of Kemin. “It is exciting to see it all culminate in our new global headquarters building.”

### About Mechdyne

Mechdyne is one of the world’s leading providers of innovative visual information technologies. Mechdyne bends technology to our will in ways that transform complex data into insights and ideas. To ensure our customers succeed, Mechdyne provides comprehensive, customized solutions that include consulting, software, technical services, and hardware integration.



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