

openreach

Case Study



A Firm Grip on Safety:

Openreach Engineers
Harness the Power of Grabo

Openreach Feedback – August 2025

Here's what the Openreach team shared after using Grabo in the field:

- £1.5 Million saved since launch
- Minimises drilling on protected buildings
- Removes need for scaffolding
- No delays from waiting on permits
- Voted #1 innovation across 24+ Openreach events
- ROI? One Grabo job saves enough to pay for five more

A Firm Grip on Safety: Openreach Engineers Harness the Power of Grabo

Introduction

In late 2023, Openreach began trialling the Grabo Vacuum Lifter as a ladder anchor point, marking a further step forward in the safety and efficiency of its engineering operations.

The collaboration began, after Openreach Safety manager Pete Evans saw the Grabo in action at Tetra Ladder Safety Systems, where it was being tested by another industry as an alternative ladder anchor device for sites where the reuseable anchor bolts couldn't be fitted.

Openreach then started its own safety risk review, including rigorous real-life scenario testing. Following successful trials, Openreach deployed almost 1000 units to its engineering teams across the UK, with early results confirming reduced delays, and greater operational efficiency.

The Grabo Vacuum Lifter: An Innovative Tool with a New Purpose

The Grabo is a handheld vacuum lifter designed to create a strong suction seal between its foam seal and various surfaces. Originally developed for the construction industry to lift heavy materials like glass, tiles, and metal sheets, Exordia Global—the UK distributors of the Grabo—identified this new application: using the Grabo as a ladder anchor for sites where traditional reuseable anchor bolts couldn't be fitted.

By producing incredibly strong suction and pairing it with an anchor point and double straps, the Grabo securely stabilises ladders on a wide range of surfaces. This innovation has expanded the Grabo's potential beyond construction and into alternative safety applications.



Solving Persistent Challenges

Openreach engineers often encounter obstacles when securing fixed anchor points for ladders where fixed anchor points are unavailable or prohibited such as:

- Glass shop fronts
- Rented accommodations
- Listed or heritage buildings

Traditional solutions, like scaffold towers, ensure safety but introduce additional cost and delays. The Grabo Ladder Anchor offers a practical solution to these issues by enabling engineers to safely and efficiently secure ladders without requiring permanent fixtures or lengthy approval processes.

Key Benefits to Openreach

- 1. Enhanced Safety:** The Grabo provides a reliable and secure anchor point, ensuring the stability of ladders across various surfaces and job types.
- 2. Improved Efficiency:** Eliminates or reduces delays from obtaining permissions or setting up scaffolding.
- 3. Cost Savings:** Reduces reliance on expensive scaffold towers and rescheduled visits.
- 4. Customer Experience:** Fewer cancellations lead to more completed appointments.

Pete Evans, National Safety Manager at Openreach, highlighted its impact. He said: “The Grabo has allowed us to complete jobs we otherwise would have needed to reschedule, all without compromising the safety of our engineers.”

Conclusion

The Grabo partnership with Openreach showcases how innovative tools can transform safety and efficiency. Repurposing the Grabo Vacuum Lifter as a ladder anchor has solved longstanding challenges, reduced delays, and elevated safety standards. As trials conclude, the strong results support wider adoption, reinforcing Openreach’s commitment to practical, safer, forward-thinking solutions.





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