

Technology driven business process and environmental solutions



In early 2007 FES FM Ltd, a leading UK Facilities Management provider, embarked on a project to improve its business performance through re-engineering of historical, paper based processes and introducing new technology facilitated methodologies. The key objectives were to streamline business processes, improve workflow and information management whilst increasing visibility of performance in key business areas.

The Client

The Facilities Management market is thriving and as companies compete to gain market share, they are turning to technology such as mobile working to reduce operating costs and give them an innovative edge over competitors. More importantly, they are passing on benefits to their clients such as more timely and accurate levels of data collection, simple but effective mechanisms for data sharing and greatly improved levels of reporting.

Those clients which sit within the health or public sectors are governed by legislation which demands data accuracy and stringent reporting against KPIs. Mobile working technology such as that provided by Enviroliance MoST is a cost effective enabler of improved data management, data accuracy and efficient management reporting.

The Trial

Enviroliance MoST, in conjunction with FES FM, carried out an analysis of existing business processes, identifying those that were inefficient, ineffective and resource intensive. Planned Preventative Maintenance Jobs (PPM) for their clients were being created on the existing Asset Management Database (AMD), which then generated paper-based 'inspection jobs'. These jobs were allocated to a field service worker who would complete the form by hand during the inspection and return the form to the office for retyping. This in turn had to be retyped back into the AMD and often typed again into a formal report.

It was clear that the paper/manual approach was very time consuming, causing duplication of effort and inaccuracy of data.

Mike Rutherford, MoST Project Manager, commented, *"The re-engineering of the PPM process was vital to the success of the trial. It allowed MoST to focus on the areas which could be developed and streamlined using mobile technology. MoST also identified the training requirements of the users and sessions were held to ensure a smooth start to the trial."*

Project Deliverables

- Implemented on time and to Budget
- Fast achievement of return on investment
- Integration of mobile working system with the Asset Management Database (AMD)
- Complete visibility of job status at all times
- Adoption of electronic data collection and report generation

Project Benefits

- Significant reduction in operating costs, paper forms and retyping of information
- Increased productivity levels
- Seamless approach to data sharing and allocation of tasks across systems
- Tighter control of management reporting against KPIs and SLAs
- Improvements in quality of data

The Results

Following the review of processes and implementation of the mobile working system, the management of the PPM tasks and recording of data on site are now capable of being carried out electronically.

From receiving the job onto the PDA, to collecting the data, sending it back, producing a final report and sending the data back to the AMD, the whole process is automated.

The link between the existing AMD and the newly introduced mobile working system is seamless and once the job has been created in the AMD it is automatically routed to the appropriate field service worker. Various data collection methods such as drop down menus and field choosers make the logging of data quick and easy.

Once completed the job is then sent back via the mobile phone network at the click of a button allowing the worker to move onto the next inspection without driving back to base with the paper form. The AMD is then updated with all relevant data once the job is complete. The whole process has been transformed and now takes a fraction of the time.

The headline objective of the project brief was to deliver business improvement.

Critical to this has been the implementation of a mobile working system to improve the ways in which field workers collected and passed back data relating to FM inspections. However, going beyond the automation of data collection, to streamline the ways in which the collected data was passed on through the process was vital.

As the project continues to save FES FM time and money, it is keen to complete the planned roll-out and investigate further working practices which could be mobilised. Field workers are key to providing feedback and are working with the project management team to review other areas where the existing systems could be reviewed and the mobile working system could be implemented.

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