

MOBILE WORKFLOW FIELD WORKERS ARE HAPPY FIELD WORKERS

There are hundreds of thousands of field workers across the country that provide vital services such as repair work, home visits and street monitoring. Currently many workers have to make several journeys to and from a company's headquarters to pick up their jobs for the day, return to depots to collect materials and finally return to the office to complete their job sheets when they finish work.

By removing the need for these workers to continually return to the office, companies could massively boost productivity across the mobile workforce, and also make reductions in fuel costs, as many unnecessary journeys can be eliminated. Additionally, the extra hours created by moving to a mobile solution can enable field workers to complete more jobs per day, and also spend more time with customers on site. The whole customer experience could be greatly improved if a customer could see that their job has been dealt with and completed on site, with the paperwork filed while in their home.

Mobile Workflow rocks!

Mobile Workflow is a practical tool that helps support those technical workers in the field with quick, simple and secure access to key applications and customer information. It runs on any Windows Mobile-enabled device with a network connection, and I really like it.

Because no two field teams have the same structure, or the same forms to complete, the application can be adapted to fit existing workflows without any need for additional programming. This means that implementation can be done quickly across the entire force, without

major disruption to the current workload. Additionally the technology is very simple to integrate with back office systems.

Mobile Workflow has many interesting functions. Users can view client histories, see vendor lists and pricing, manage multiple contacts and locations, fill out forms, review billing details and optimise schedules.

I particularly like the manual route sheets and collection notes, which provide a good starting point for any field teams that have never tried a mobile solution. The lists can easily be customised within minutes, without any programming skills, using a very logical approach to field dependencies. By including this adaptability, workers can try out the existing lists, and make recommendations to improve them to best suit their job processing.

You WILL use this app...

One of the most common mistakes made when implementing mobile applications is trying to force a team to start using a brand new technology, rather than working with them to trial, test out and review the functionality. By giving teams the ability to shape checklists and orders in the most practical way possible, it will not only streamline workflows, but will also make employees feel that they are actually contributing to getting the technology up and running, so everyone is happy.

The technology also links into existing functions on a mobile device, for example the in built camera. Workers can quickly record any problems visually and log these immediately into the back office system. Photos can also be complemented with free hand drawings and comments for extra explanation and clarification.

Mobile Workflow also has great benefits

for the management team back in the office. The technology has a dual function; the tracking element means that a manager can know exactly where all of the field team are at a glance, providing security for the team, and the completion of job forms on the move means that daily and weekly activity reporting can be compiled in a much shorter space of time.

Home on time

Additional functions include expense and time recording, that are traditionally tasks that needed to be completed at the end of the day at headquarters – yawn. Having the ability to do this out in the field means that workers can use up any dead time productively between jobs, and skip off home on time.

Mobile Workflow is part of the xTrack portfolio of tracking technology. This enables administrators and even customers can see their jobs assigned to field workers on a map view, with the current status of the job, providing a comprehensive picture of what the team is working on at any given moment.

www.genesis.co.uk



Mark Seemann is Mobile Business' applications reviewer extraordinaire. He joined Genesis as director of product marketing though the acquisition of ServeLogic, where he remains CEO. He has 11 years' experience in the ISP and telecoms sectors, having been a board level director for 10 years. Mark's expertise is product design and marketing to the UK SME market.

If you have any comments or suggestions for Mark, please email him through the editor: hmclean@mbmagazine.co.uk