

Wakefield and District Housing Case Study

Spirit Data Capture and MobiControl Help WDH Manage Its Mobile Devices



Background

The use of mobile data capture devices has become widespread across many areas of industry, commerce and government. However, organisations with large numbers of devices need to monitor them and troubleshoot any issues. This can lead to inefficiency and unnecessary costs, negating the benefits the devices bring. When Wakefield and District Housing wanted greater control over its devices, it selected MobiControl. This is a mobile device management solution developed by SOTI Inc. and supplied by independent consultancy, Spirit Data Capture Limited.

Wakefield and District Housing (WDH) is the largest single housing stick transfer organisation and England's fifth largest housing organisation. It is responsible for over 31,000 homes and employs some 1,500 people. It also manages over 50 sheltered housing schemes for elderly and vulnerable people.

The ICT Department of WDH is responsible for maintaining and developing software and services that will support the business and enhance its efficiency and effectiveness. This ensures that tenants receive the highest possible levels of service.

Some time ago, the department developed a mobile solution for its field workers, with the aim of reducing waste and streamlining processes. It purchased a large number of Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), which helped to eliminate the paper-based element of WDH's Responsive Repairs process. They are used by a wide range of operatives, including plasterers, gas engineers, plumbers, electricians and joiners.

The Business Challenge

Wendy Popplewell, the department's Business Analyst, explains: "The PDAs allow our operatives to manage their own work, so they no longer have to travel to a depot for their job tickets. They can ring the tenants to find out more information so that they can attend the repair with any parts that might be needed.

This in turn eliminated the need for them to go back and forth to stores and depots. They can arrange their schedule so that they can go to tenants who live in the same areas on the same day, achieving further fuel economies. Unfortunately, if there was a problem with the PDA, the operative often had to travel back to the ICT department, eliminating some of the efficiencies that had been achieved by using the mobile devices. We therefore started

Industry Application Area:
Housing

Mobile Devices:
PDAs

Summary:

Wakefield and District Housing
England's fifth largest housing organisation responsible for over 31,000 homes and 1,500 employees.

Challenges

Worker Productivity, Device Management Costs, Labour Costs and Mobile Device Support

MobiControl Solution

Affordable and Easy-To-Use, Centralized and Remote Control, Helpdesk Tools, Data Analytics, and Real-Time Device Information

Result

Reduced Device Management Costs, Increased ROI, Streamlined Mobile Operations and Enhanced Security

"We opted for MobiControl because it's easy to use, is logical and doesn't require a huge amount of training. It's intuitive and has great help pages for further information. Other solutions we explored just didn't have the same level of functionality."

-Wendy Popplewell,
Business Analyst



CARLTON COURT
Housing facility managed by WDH

looking for a solution – so that if there was an issue with the device’s software, the operatives wouldn’t have to return here.”

The Solution

The ICT department wanted a reliable level of remote access to the PDAs for troubleshooting purposes. It looked at several options, including MobiControl, a device management solution developed by a Canadian-based company, SOTI Inc.

MobiControl is an advanced Device Management, Helpdesk and Security solution for mobile and desktop computing devices. Built in award-winning technology, it offers a rapid and reliable performance over any network, for any size of deployment. Wendy carried out an Internet search and found that it was distributed in the UK by Spirit Data Capture.

She says: “We opted for MobiControl because it’s easy to use, is logical and doesn’t require a huge amount of training. It’s intuitive and has great help pages for further information. Other solutions we explored just didn’t have the same level of functionality.”

Spirit provided an online demonstration version of the MobiControl system, so that WDH could trial it for two months before installing it. It was subsequently installed on WDH’s server, and an agent (a piece of software) was also installed on a total

of 120 PDAs. The agent sits on the device and monitors it, occasionally pushing data back to the server. The ICT department received support from Spirit at every stage of the installation process.

The Result

Wendy continues: “We can now access our operatives’ PDAs remotely, which enables them to continue working even if they have an issue with their PDA. They no longer have to come back to headquarters – which could entail a 30 mile round trip. Because MobiControl allows us to manage the PDAs remotely, we can diagnose and resolve any faults. Now, only hardware problems have to come back to the ICT department.”

MobiControl is also able to track users if necessary and can send a message to a device to ‘kill’ the application if the device is stolen. Wendy comments: “Although we don’t use MobiControl’s tracking facility to track our personnel, it has proved useful when PDAs have been lost or stolen.”

She concludes: “MobiControl is excellent – it’s a good value for money and is easy to install. We’ve had a great support throughout from Spirit. They’ve provided a good follow-up service, they’ve been attentive and have always come back to me when I’ve had queries. We would be happy to use them again.”

Solution Benefits:

- Real-time remote control and helpdesk tools
- Software and data provisioning
- Centralized management over any network connection
- Instantaneous device deployment and configuration
- Management of several complex mobile projects simultaneously
- Reduced cost, time and resources

About SOTI Inc.

SOTI is the world’s most trusted provider of Enterprise Mobility Management (EMM) solutions, with over 10,000 enterprise customers and millions of devices managed worldwide. SOTI makes mobility work by developing industry-leading solutions for EMM, allowing organizations to support corporate-liable and Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policies. SOTI MobiControl solves the unique challenges involved in managing, securing, supporting, and tracking mobile and desktop computing devices across all platforms.

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