RUNNING AN EFFICIENT FIELD TEAM

RUGGED COMPUTERS HELP AVC'S ENGINEERS COMPLETE 30,000 INSTALLS/REPAIRS A WEEK

THE AVC GROUP

The AVC Group is the sole business partner for BSkyB installations and service in the UK. Its 1,500 engineers visits 30,000 homes weekly. The AVC Group uses Alternative Logic's FieldLogic platform to plan schedules, distribute jobs to engineers and track performance in real time.

Engineers accessed Alternative Logic's applications using Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs). However, the devices were fragile and broke regularly – at any time 15 percent were not working. Also as they were consumer products, the models changed around every six months. So the AVC Group had a mixed estate of handheld devices that was expensive to maintain. Also, Alternative Logic had to write patches to ensure its software could work on all devices.

With these issues in mind, the AVC Group moved to deploy one type of device to its engineers for a three-year period, standardizing on Motorola Solutions' MC55/65 rugged handheld computers. The devices are providing the reliable operations AVC needs to support its engineers, deliver great service, and reduce costs.

CUSTOMER PROFILE
Organisation
The AVC Group

Location
The UK

Industry
Broadcast installations

Partner
Alternative Logic

Motorola Solutions' products
- 400 MC55 rugged handheld computers
- 1,100 MC65 rugged handheld computers
- Mobility Services Platform – for remote device management
- Service from the Start (Bronze)

> "Alternative Logic's workforce management software helps us successfully coordinate 30,000 installations or repairs in the UK weekly. We have replaced our engineers' fragile PDAs used to access the software with tough handheld computers from Motorola. The fantastic thing for us is the reliability of the devices. They are also designed for business with excellent support and systems to remotely manage and maintain them. Standardizing on these devices is reducing maintenance and saving us money."
>
> Martin Kemp, Systems Implementation Manager, AVC
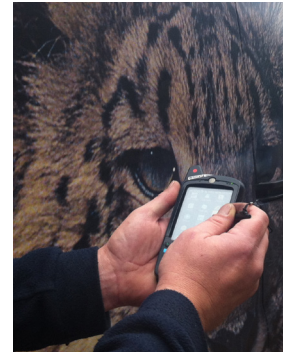
CHALLENGE

The AVC Group uses Alternative Logic's FieldLogic platform to coordinate its 1,500 UK engineers. Jobs can be sent remotely in batches or to individuals. Engineers can update customers on arrival times, complete timesheets and report on their activity and job status, review customer histories, see customer contact details, and fill in audit compliant reports. In addition, they can take images to attach to job files to support compliance expectations. And they can scan parts as they are used. As engineers' stocks of parts are depleted a restocking van is sent to them with new supplies.

The software helps AVC hit appointment times and inform customers of delays and expected arrival windows. It also hugely reduces paperwork and supports efficient workflows to help AVC achieve a high volume of installations.

Any downtime to engineers' PDAs, which were used to access the software, impacted their ability to work. Unfortunately, the devices were not up to the job. Engineers are in and out of vehicles and up and down ladders regularly and the PDAs were often dropped. When this happened, the device usually failed. Cover had to be put in place for the engineer while a replacement PDA was arranged at a significant cost to the business.

In addition, as the PDAs were consumer products, they were updated often. This meant that AVC was running numerous different PDA models with a commensurate rise in support costs. And, as each model often has revised features, Alternative Logic had to write software patches.

Given the high level of PDA failure and rising costs, the AVC Group looked to standardize on a rugged model of handheld computer.

SOLUTION

Handheld computers from leading manufacturers were reviewed. These were tested against criteria including size, ease of use, ruggedness and more.

Motorola Solutions' robust MC55 and MC65 handheld computers were selected. The decision was based on the belief that the computer offered the best combination of comfortable size and durable build. The computer can be easily carried in a pocket or clipped to a belt, is simple to use, and is tested to survive life on the road. It also comes with the backing of a five-year lifespan and the promise of five more years support after that. The AVC Group also invested in Motorola Solutions' service and support and its Mobile Service Platform (MSP) to manage the devices remotely (e.g. update software).

BENEFITS

The primary benefit for AVC is device reliability that has improved by a factor of 66 percent – engineer downtime has fallen, removing a significant cost to the business.

Further savings come from a number of areas. The expense associated with managing and supporting a mixed estate of devices – and writing software patches for new PDAs – has been removed. Also, the MSP platform enables the computers to be triaged and updated remotely, delivering significant maintenance efficiencies. And, should an engineer have a problem with the device, this is replaced immediately from a contingency pool. Their product is picked up and returned within 72 hours under the terms of the Service from the Start Bronze contract (accidental damage is covered too). With the service cover, the AVC Group has the confidence of a set cost – with no surprises – over the management of its devices for three years, to the benefit of budget and business planning.

The capabilities of Alternative Logic's FieldLogic solution and the reliability of the rugged MC55/65s provide the trusted mobile platform to help the AVC Group deliver its high levels of service.

Applications
- **Workforce planning:** Allocation of appointments on a bulk/individual basis
- **All details to hand:** Engineers can access job details, customer history, customer contact details, and more
- **Inventory management:** Restocking of engineers' vans based on parts used
- **Audit trails:** Images are captured and attached to job files
- **Paperless workflows:** Engineers can timesheet and report from the field in real time
- **Time analysis:** Of, for example, time spent on site and travelling
- **Proof of service:** Signature capture

Benefits
- **Reduced maintenance costs:** Device maintenance costs have fallen substantially
- **Reduced development costs:** Patches no longer need to be written for the software
- **Increased uptime:** Engineers experience less downtime with more reliable devices
- **Better business planning:** AVC Group has a clear view over management costs for its handheld computers with no hidden surprises
- **Reduced management costs:** With remote device management

For more information on how Motorola Solutions' rugged handheld computers can improve the efficiency of your field service teams, please visit us on the web at www.motorola.com/Business/ XU-EN/Business+Solutions/Product+Solutions/Fleet+Management or access our global contact directory at www.motorolasolutions.com/contactus

MOTOROLA