

Case Study

Sysnet's digital pen and paper solution helps CES Microcare dramatically improve operational efficiency



About MX

MX is the industry alliance for mobile and wireless – we connect the community in Scotland and beyond. The key objectives of MX are to help stimulate and grow the sector in Scotland and to promote the value and accelerate the uptake of mobile and wireless solutions.

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CES Microcare service microwave ovens for many household names including Burger King, KFC, Costa Coffee, Tesco, Subway and even Gordon Ramsey's London restaurant, as shown in ITV's Hell's Kitchen. The company's team of service engineers, who typically work remotely from CES's main office in Larbert, carry out over 8000 customer visits per year.

"During each service visit, the engineer completed a job sheet detailing the work carried out and any parts needed to service or repair the oven," said Malcolm Skinner, Managing Director of CES Microcare. "After the customer had signed the form, the engineer then faxed or posted the form back to our head office."

When the form was received at CES's head office, this started a number of activities such as parts ordering, issuing invoices and scheduling follow up visits. With over 13,000 job sheets to process each year, this was a very time consuming and costly process.

"We wanted to gain a competitive advantage by speeding up the entire job sheet process and by automating as many of the manual back-office tasks as we could," said Malcolm. "We already had some experience with mobile technology through our use of using satellite tracking for our vans, and we felt that this was an area worth exploring."

CES initially trialled a wireless PDA solution – but given the hostile nature of kitchens and the overall cost of developing the back-office systems – this approach was quickly abandoned. "We needed a

solution that was rugged, efficient, non-intrusive and cost-effective, and the PDA solution was wide of the mark," said Malcolm.

Sysnet, based in Glasgow, proposed their Smartform digital pen and paper solution. Immediately CES felt that this approach would help them meet most of their objectives. One of the most attractive benefits was that the engineers could continue to use the same job sheet that they and the customers were used to.

Now when an engineer completes a visit, the customer signs the form and by simply ticking a "send" box on the form, the information is sent to CES's head office within 60 seconds.

"There's a lot of complexity in the solution," said Peter Burtwistle Managing Director of Sysnet. "The digital pen communicates with the mobile handset using Bluetooth, the handset then connects to the Internet via GPRS, the Web server then talks to the pen over the GPRS /Bluetooth channel and finally receives and processes the pens strokes and sends the result on to CES via email. However all of this is transparent to the engineer and more importantly the customer."

The system has delivered a 400% ROI over a 12 month period and improved CES's operational efficiency across their entire business. "The solution has had a dramatic impact on our day-to-day operations and has helped raised CES's profile throughout the service industry," said Malcolm. "More importantly it has improved efficiency and staff productivity, added to our bottom-line and helped us to maintain and grow our customer base."

About Sysnet

Sysnet is a thriving IT solutions company of 15 year standing, working hard to create innovative and practical solutions for businesses and consumers. Our vision is to make a "positive difference" and we have fantastic list of clients who we have worked with, often on a partnering basis, often for many years. It's a two way street, and we learn from each project that we undertake, and endeavour to share our experience and bring something new to each of our clients

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