

Case Study:

Electrolux mobilises its after sales service with Nokia

Nokia 9300 streamlines communication to Electrolux field engineers and replaces paperwork with wireless technology

May 2005

Case Study Profile

Organisation: Electrolux Home Products Pty Ltd

Location: Sydney, Australia

Industry: Whitegoods

Nokia 9300 Solution at a glance

Situation Analysis

Electrolux is Australasia's leading whitegoods manufacturer and services two million customers in Australia each year. The company supports all of its products with their 'Top Service' after sales Customer Care Program. Behind this program is a network of nine branches with 180 field service engineers.

Electrolux was using a paper-based job system that involved reports being hand written on the job, then manually re-entered by desk clerks in the office; creating a costly, inefficient and time-consuming way to operate.

"The existing process was terribly cumbersome and had a turnaround cycle of three to five days," commented Robert Astorri Business Development Manager for Electrolux. "Our engineers and desk clerks were double handling the recording of information, making it very inefficient with room for error."

Efficient Partnering

With the aim of finding a systems integrator with which to partner, Mr Astorri came across Sydney-based MobileIT. The company had an established track record in helping to streamline business data flow and increase field personnel productivity, and was able to show Electrolux a number of reference sites, including Fujitsu and Carrier Air-conditioning.

The Solution

Electrolux decided to appoint MobileIT to help improve the inefficiencies. Following a thorough needs assessment, MobileIT recommended a fully integrated mobile field service solution. Looking at various hardware options the decision was made to go with the Nokia 9300, Celesta Smart Forms software and Canon BJC-50/55 mobile printers.

"Keeping in mind our user base, we ruled out PDAs because the technicians wouldn't use a stylus and a laptop meant more equipment to carry," recounted Mr. Astorri.

"The Nokia 9300 was the perfect solution – it combined a mobile phone with Celesta Smart Forms software to enable our guys to be fully mobile and paperless. The only paper used was the invoice printed for the customer at the end of the job!"

Staged Implementation

To ensure the technicians were presented with a practical solution, a pilot program was set up involving a team of four of the technicians. With two of them in their 50s and one computer illiterate, the end result needed to be simple to learn and easy to integrate.

Mr. Astorri commented: "Our pilot team was responsible for designing most of the look and feel of the solution, which has been instrumental in its smooth integration into our team's daily operation.

"During the four month roll out, we started our technicians with a half-day training session and they were back on the road that afternoon. Whilst some of them took a week to become completely electronic, some of our guys were paperless the next day!"

How it Works

Since rolling out in February 2004, the reaction from the technicians has been extremely positive. Time spent on planning their schedule for the day and processing each job has been greatly reduced.

At the start of each day, jobs are received by the technician and allocated a sequence number, which is transmitted back to the office service system to update customers if they call. Each job is imported into a customised form environment on the phones, allowing the technicians to complete the service request in a logical manner. When finished, the engineer wirelessly updates the Electrolux service management application, which updates the accounts and stock control systems.

"To make sure the technicians grasped the technology quickly, we structured the process to flow in a logical manner that was similar to the old paper solution - just without the inefficiencies," said Mike Day, Sales and Marketing Director, MobileIT.

"The technicians were very happy to move to the new system as it got rid of wasted time in paper-based reporting."

Multiple parts, stock and payment reconciliation reports and a large spare parts and billing schedule database are also included in the final solution. By accessing the spare parts database technicians are able to order parts onsite. Where previously they would have to return two weeks later with the part; now they can sometimes be back with the customer the next day.

Business Benefits

As a result of the implementation, technicians' productivity has increased enabling them to complete 180 more jobs per day. By going wireless, the company has made significant paper savings, which has meant a reduction in paper costs of \$140,000 as well as benefiting the environment.

The final operating cost for the mobile field service solution came in below original estimates due to the efficiencies the new system created.

Additionally, the new solution has gained international recognition with representatives from Electrolux in South East Asia reviewing the implementation. They were so impressed with the efficiencies they are now considering implementing the mobile field solution in their region.

The new solution has not only met the company's requirements, but has exceeded expectations. The solution has ended up being much more than just a job dispatch application – it's a total solution that over time will benefit the whole business whilst improving customer service.

Customer Profile Section

Company: Electrolux
Headquarters: Sweden
Founded: 1912
Telephone: 02 9717 2111
URL: www.electrolux.com.au

Primary Business: Producer of powered appliances for kitchen, cleaning and outdoor use.

Pull Quote:

"The Nokia 9300 was the perfect solution – it combined a mobile phone with Celesta Smart Forms software to enable our guys to be fully mobile and paperless. The only paper used was the invoice printed for the customer at the end of the job!"

Robert Astorri, Business Development Manager, Electrolux

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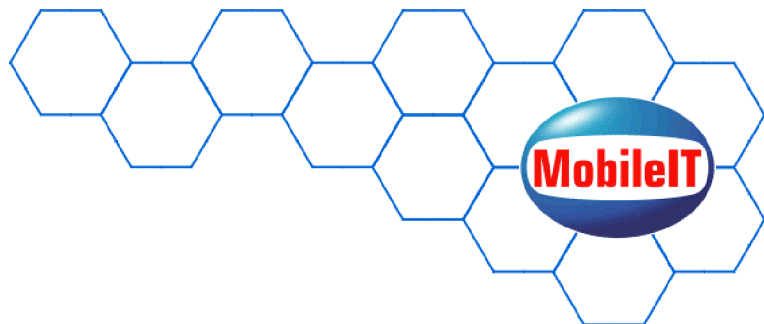
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