

# A mobile working case study for Swindon Commercial Services (SCS)

Part of Swindon Borough Council





## Time to move...

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## Description of customer's business

Swindon Commercial Services (SCS), part of Swindon Borough Council.

SCS is responsible for providing traditional council services such as street cleaning, waste and recycling, highways maintenance, grounds maintenance, housing maintenance and support services, as well as work won through open tender, including construction and project work, catering, security and building cleaning.

The organisation has a turnover of £58m and employs 960 full-time staff. Within its Housing Maintenance division it manages the maintenance of over 11,000 properties.

## Brief description of the solution

Consilium has provided SCS with a 100 user real-time system covering a range of mobile applications branded TotalMobile, running on the Symbol MC9094 EDA and Microsoft Windows Mobile 5. These applications are integrated to their core back office systems such as Housing Management and CRM. The TotalMobile applications are built using the latest technologies from Microsoft including Microsoft SQL Server replication.

Connectivity is provided by GPRS or Wi-Fi and the TotalMobile solution allows for times when users are out of signal range permitting them to continue working on with the job data re-synchronising when back in coverage.

**Job Management** – Sends jobs and associated information to mobile operatives and allows them to update the back office with status and details of work completed in real time. This improves efficiency through enabling agile job scheduling.

**Timesheets** - Provides detailed time recording either as a standalone solution or automatically via seamless integration with other TotalMobile applications.

**Best Practice** - Assists in enforcing health and safety policies and duty of care for mobile workers.

**Materials** - Manages Imprest van stocks allowing organisations to improve their management of stock based in mobile locations. This is integrated to back office systems in real-time to provide constant stock replenishment.

**Gas Appliance Servicing** - Captures regulatory appliance inspection and work information also ensuring records are updated and held centrally. Required documentation can also be produced on site.

## **When was the solution implemented?**

Jan 06 through Aug 07

## **What customer business challenge was the solution designed to address?**

SCS was challenged by Swindon Borough Council to transform itself into a successful commercial business providing a financial return to the Council.

However, one of the major constraints to this change programme was thought to be the existing IT solution within SCS. A lack of investment had resulted in a weak technology platform that was unable to support the business in its quest for winning new work or retaining existing work in the short, medium or long term.

Therefore, a key element in the transformation to a commercial operation was to improve the IT platform and undergo the associated business change. This would enable SCS to improve its overall service offerings, whilst at the same time generating organisational efficiencies and savings.

As part of the IT review, SCS was also keen to modernise its workforce and prepare it for the future. This centred on giving employees access to mobile working solutions in addition to an integrated job management system and modern call handling technology.

## **How does the solution meet the customer's business needs?**

Improved IT capabilities and fast track implementation of new working practices. Better overall service performance, increased job completion rates, improved customer satisfaction, financial and service efficiencies as well as higher Council CPA and Housing ratings.

- SCS to be competitive with leading market providers
- To drive out efficiencies
- To start the workforce modernisation programme
- To provide opportunities for winning new business



**For SCS the business objective was to provide:**

- A technology solution, which will equal and improve upon costs and services
- Meet the Authorities corporate priorities
- Offer robust real time Management Information for SCS and its clients
- Enable real time information to ensure jobs are completed at first point of contact
- To enable SCS to compete on an equal standing with the market leader

**How does the solution work?**

The application, which went live in just three months, is hosted in an offsite data centre and covers financials, repairs and maintenance of housing stock.

TotalMobile is the application tier of an enterprise Windows Mobile strategy. It allows an organisation to deliver and manage integrated mobile applications for field workers.

TotalMobile is developed using Microsoft technology and provides a network agnostic, casually connected applications platform. This means that TotalMobile applications continue to provide a seamless user experience regardless of network availability and that Total Mobile can use any available network such as GPRS, WiFi etc.

**What kind of impact or results has the solution had? (RoI etc.)**

**Improvements Achieved**

- Increase in job completion rate through 'right first time' leading to an increase in customer satisfaction
- 18.4% productivity improvement on Housing Repairs contract, equal to 5 employee's work per annum
- Reduced travel and decision-making time resulted in efficiencies which equate to 5% of available labour per year
- An increased efficiency of 10% in the back-office through process improvement
- Increased speed of job processing from call centre to site
- Saving in overheads of £30,000 per annum for multipart stationery

## What makes this solution particularly innovative, unique or otherwise significant?

All components of the solution are hosted in an off-site highly resilient datacentre. During heaving flooding this summer (2007) it proved itself invaluable as the customers office was flooded and their systems would have been down for days had it not been hosted off-site.

The mobile solution is built using Microsoft's latest development environment .Net and utilises Microsoft's SQL Server Replication Services, allowing operatives and users to continue using the mobile solution even when out of range of any signal coverage.

Housing repairs jobs are scheduled dynamically. As each user completes a job the system allocates the next most relevant task using complex algorithms based on location, priority, skills required and other criteria.



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