

FIELD TECHNICIANS AT PORTSMOUTH WATER ELIMINATE PAPERWORK WITH THE BLACKBERRY SOLUTION



Portsmouth Water is an independent water supply company serving over 280,000 customers in and around Portsmouth, south-east England. It has a long tradition of providing both a high standard of safe drinking water and exemplary customer service. In a report issued by Ofwat, the government regulatory agency, in January 2004, Portsmouth Water was identified as the most efficient water company in England and Wales for both operating and capital maintenance efficiency.

THE CHALLENGE

Portsmouth Water is an independent water supply company serving over 280,000 customers in and around Portsmouth, south-east England. It has a long tradition of providing both a high standard of safe drinking water and exemplary customer service. In a report issued by Ofwat, the government regulatory agency, in January 2004, Portsmouth Water was identified as the most efficient water company in England and Wales for both operating and capital maintenance efficiency.

Water maintenance plays a vital role in providing potable water to millions. The field engineers at Portsmouth Water were spending a great deal of their time on the road visiting customers all across the region. To receive vital information about the next job or close down a completed call out, staff had to travel back to the company's headquarters in Havant to fill out the requisite paperwork. This labour-intensive process not only increased staff travelling time, it also reduced how many calls each engineer could handle in a day.

THE SOLUTION

Portsmouth Water began by setting up a dedicated team of internal IT experts to identify the best solutions available. After considering a wide range of remote working devices and software solutions, Portsmouth Water called upon the expertise of Interchange Group to enhance the reliability of Portsmouth Water's company communications. Interchange's mission was to develop a bespoke application that would fulfil the voice and data requirements of field staff without incurring significant costs.

Interchange Group recommended a BlackBerry® solution that uses Flowfinity Actions, an application toolkit from Flowfinity. The solution integrated seamlessly with the company's existing software package, to enable engineers to complete and submit job forms in real time. Running on O2's mobile network, the solution uses BlackBerry® 8700g smartphones. Engineers can receive electronic job sheets and send emails on the move, as well as access their Outlook calendars. All information relating to the status of jobs is now dispatched straight to the BlackBerry® smartphone.

BENEFITS

ABILITY TO SEND AND RECEIVE DATA REMOTELY, FREEING UP VALUABLE STAFF RESOURCES

REDUCED TRANSPORT COSTS, IMPROVED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

STREAMLINING COMMUNICATION AND REDUCING ADMINISTRATION

ROBUST NETWORK AND IMPROVED COVERAGE

"Communication is key for our business. Our field engineers rely on accurate, swift information on the move. By using the BlackBerry solution, jobs can be dispatched to engineers on the road and all paperwork can be completed on site"

Rod Porteous, Distribution Engineer,
Portsmouth Water

THE BENEFITS

The BlackBerry solution offers two main advantages. The first one is zero paperwork: engineers no longer have to manually print over 53,000 forms, recovering valuable staff resources. The second advantage is improved productivity. Making the necessary tools available to engineers on their BlackBerry smartphone has reduced the amount of time spent driving back and forth to Havant. Thanks to the BlackBerry solution, Portsmouth Water reports an increase in the number of jobs each engineer can complete in a week, helping to maintain the company's position as one of the most efficient water authorities in the UK.

Rod Porteous, Distribution Engineer, Portsmouth Water, comments: "Communication is key for our business. Our field engineers rely on accurate, swift information on the move. By using the BlackBerry solution, jobs can be dispatched to engineers on the road and all paperwork can be completed on site."

"By eliminating the need to return to base to complete paperwork, our response rate to customer call outs has improved dramatically -- the equivalent of a working month annually. This time can now be spent further improving our services to ensure our customers remain the most satisfied in the UK," concludes Porteous.

For further information: www.blackberry.com/go/success

BLACKBERRY CASE STUDY
PORTSMOUTH WATER

