Spirit's data capture solution gets a 'good reception' from Peaks & Plains

spirit®
DATA CAPTURE LTD

When Peaks & Plains Housing Trust needed more reliable handsets offering a good and consistent reception for its mobile workers, it turned to Spirit Data Capture Limited. Spirit recommended Motorola ES400s, along with SOTI's MobiControl device management system. The new units are already proving to be highly reliable – and MobiControl has reduced the Trust's device support costs.

Peaks & Plains Housing Trust is a not-for-profit company that provides high quality, affordable homes in Macclesfield and the surrounding area. Its purpose is: "Helping to improve lives". The government's Audit Commission inspected the Trust in 2009 and rated it in the top 10% of housing associations nationwide.

The Peaks & Plains ICT team supports all communications, software and hardware across the Trust. The organisation has over 200 users, 80 of whom are mobile users, working within an area covering 200 square miles. They include trade-based plumbers, joiners, electricians etc. and support staff.

The team needed reliable handsets for its mobile workers that would be resistant to knocks and drops but would provide a good reception. This is important as the area has a number of black spots for mobile coverage. The previous devices weren't very rugged and frequently got damaged. They were also unreliable in terms of signal strength and battery life.

Simon Penaluna, Assistant Director of ICT, says: "We wanted new devices that would be semi-rugged and that could be used as a phone as well as a data PDA (personal digital assistant). We also wanted to ensure that they wouldn't reach the end of their life within two months of purchasing them!"

Another limitation imposed on the new handsets was that the company's back office system can only be installed on a Windows Mobile 6.5 operating system and suitable devices were becoming harder to find. The Trust heard about Spirit Data Capture Limited from another Housing Association and from research on the Internet. Spirit is an independent specialist in mobile enterprise solutions. It recommended a solution that included SOTI's MobiControl versatile mobile device management system and Motorola ES400s.

MobiControl is the leading software application for the management, support and security of remote mobile devices. The Motorola ES400 is a cutting-edge mobile enterprise digital assistant (EDA) with comprehensive voice and data capabilities. It is a powerful but pocket-sized device that is ideal for mobile workers. It has enterprise-class durability and a three-inch colour touch screen. It even has a built-in biometric fingerprint reader to restrict its usage to authorised workers.

Simon Penaluna says: "The Motorola ES400 has a QWERTY keyboard. The reception from the device is much better than other solutions that we had trialled. It's very robust and reliable - in my opinion, the ES400 is the best Windows Mobile 6.5 device available. The Motorola units link into Outlook to provide access to emails and also link into our CORE housing database system, which communicates information about jobs to and from the operatives."

He adds: "MobiControl is running well and its extensive functionality allows us to restrict all of the different aspects of the devices and to take control of them from the office if there are any issues. This cuts the cost of support for my team, as it avoids the need for them to either travel to the operative or to get the operative to return to the office to resolve the issues."

Simon concludes: "Spirit have been very efficient and have helped us by issuing loan devices so that our users could make an informed decision about the most suitable solution. They have offered advice on MobiControl licensing choices and have always been easy to communicate with. I would fully recommend their service."

PEAKS & PLAINS
Housing Trust

MOTOROLA

SOTI®