



# Spirit's QA Inspection module boosts productivity for Tayside Contracts

Quality Assurance is an important part of the supply chain that can be greatly enhanced by the use of tailor-made software solutions. When Tayside Contracts needed a new Quality Assurance Inspection system for monitoring its cleaning, catering and janitorial services, it asked Spirit Data Capture Limited for help. Spirit developed a QAI module that has increased the productivity of some operatives by over 50%.

Tayside Contracts is a local authority contracting organisation that provides catering, cleaning, and road, vehicle and winter maintenance for Scotland's Tayside region. More specifically, it's a Direct Services Organisation acting on behalf of three councils: Dundee, Angus, and Perth and Kinross. The company employs some 2,500 people, working in over 300 establishments.

## Defining the issue

The firm's Facilities Business Improvement unit supports three Business Managers who manage cleaning, catering, school crossing patrol and janitorial services for the three councils. Business Improvement Manager, Ibukun Strachan, explains: "Our challenge is to provide solutions that use a consistent approach throughout the three areas of business that also meet the three councils' needs. We have to demonstrate to them that we're providing a cost-effective, high quality service. We therefore needed to find a single system that could be tailored to monitor quality across the three areas of service."

The Facilities Management team is currently monitoring up to 460 premises. The new quality monitoring system would have to comply with ISO9001:2000 standards. It will be used by the team for routine inspections - to complete quality audits, record the outcomes, and monitor continuous improvement results of the services it provides to the councils.

There were various other criteria that the new system would have to meet. Firstly, it would need to be configured and supported via a cloud-based platform hosted by the supplier. Secondly, it would have to be hosted on a web-based management console branded with Tayside Contracts' colour schemes and logo.

Thirdly, it needed to provide a logical sequence of screens and fields so that users will be able to rapidly access, modify, skip or jump to other areas as defined in the technical workshop and specifications. It would also need to generate a range of reports, configured by the company. Finally, the supplier would need to provide full training, remote support and technical support.

"The system had to be easy to use and flexible," says Ibukun Strachan, "because it will be accessed by a range of users with differing access capabilities. It also needed to be capable of adapting to our ever-changing business needs." Tayside Contracts approached Spirit Data Capture Limited, an independent specialist in enterprise mobility solutions, for help in finding the right solution. Spirit had previously provided maintenance services for the handheld devices that the team had used with a previous quality system.

## Developing the solution

Spirit developed a powerful Quality Assurance Inspection (QAI) module that is highly cost-effective and easy to use. The module has been designed to streamline the whole inspection process, using pre-defined standards. It includes an app that can be used on Android smartphones and tablets. The app enables an inspector to inspect a building, area, room or item by answering a series of questions set by Tayside Contracts. For each question, the inspector is prompted to record an answer of 'Pass', 'Fail' or 'Not Applicable'.

The other element is a web-based dashboard, which is user-friendly and can be customised with a company's logo and brand colours. It also provides administrative facilities for setting up and configuring the QAI system and for accessing and viewing the inspection reports. Spirit also provides full training and support for the module.

## Reaping the rewards

The new system is initially being installed on handheld devices, used by 28 operatives to conduct inspections on a planned and unplanned basis across hundreds of sites to monitor the three different services. The outcomes of these inspections are accessible by the line managers of the operatives providing the front line services and also by the council clients via the web portal.

Ibukun continues: "Spirit's QAI module is very user-friendly, flexible and is tailored to our specific needs. Its ability to reflect our corporate branding on the inspections and reports really adds to its flexibility. So far, it has been performing extremely well - indeed, the operatives whose sole role is to carry out these inspections have reported an increase in their productivity of over 50% as a result of using the new system!"

She adds: "The feedback from users has been very positive, with comments such as - 'very quick and easy to use' and 'really user friendly, even for those of us that are less familiar with technology'. We've been very pleased with Spirit - they took the time to get to know our business needs and have therefore been able to suggest further improvements to our system that add yet more value. In all of my dealings with them, I've found them to be responsive, professional and, most of all, very patient!"