

Van Wagner Case Study

Van Wagner empowers communications with wireless hotspot technology

Established over 30 years ago, Van Wagner Communications has become a world-renowned advertising firm with headquarters in New York, Washington DC, and Los Angeles. In the early eighties, Van Wagner Communications expanded its services to extend to an international market. Van Wagner Communications provides and maintains advertising bulletins, walls, telephone kiosks, construction wraps, and signage in sporting arenas. The primary goal of Van Wagner Communications is to “provide premier advertising venues to advertisers with placements that will be broadly accepted by residents of the many diverse communities...” (Richard Schaps, CEO of Van Wagner Communications).

Toward the end of 1999, Van Wagner Communications began its Telephone Kiosk Program in Manhattan, New York encompassing roughly 1000 local venues.

In 2002, Van Wagner Communications signed a deal with Viacom Outdoor Group, Inc., a subsidiary of the leading global media company Viacom. This contract added roughly 1600 additional venues in Manhattan alone and an additional 700 venues all across New York.



The Challenge

Simply put, Van Wagner Communications outgrew its existing data management system. It was no longer feasible to manage such a high number of clients and projects in spreadsheet fashion.

Datex Corporation studied the business operations of Van Wagner Communications. It became immediately obvious that Van Wagner was doing much of their management manually. This proved to be tedious and timely, wasting manpower hours daily. It was later found that data integrity was being compromised due to this process. Hard copy work orders did not allow for real-time updates and field technicians were forced to jot notes on each work order by hand. This allowed for incomplete notation and inconsistency among field technicians.



In addition, Van Wagner administrators had no way to monitor the status of work orders in progress. Their system lacked real-time updates to administrators in the office. Finally, there was no straightforward way to track supplies used on Kiosk maintenance or bill for additional supplies or work. This had adverse affects on inventory management in addition to creating multiple accounting headaches.

Datex Case Study- Van Wagner Outdoor Advertising

The Solution

Datex Corporation considered the functionality of both field technicians and administrators and came up with a plan - create custom software to run on Symbol's PPT 8146, capable of communicating wirelessly using hotspots in the Manhattan area to connect to the internet via XML protocol.

First, a new desktop application was designed, limiting the amount of data that has to be entered manually. Intended to be user friendly and require minimum training, the custom application pre-fills commonly used fields and only displays information pertinent to the given task. This saves administrators time and energy, allowing them to process data quickly and ideally generate more business and profit. Second, transferring data between the field technician's handheld device and the administrator's desktop application wirelessly eliminated data discrepancy. Kiosk information is loaded into the handheld device using barcode technology and the majority of data entry is completed using fields with set parameters. Data standardization is achieved. Compact peripheral printers allow barcode labels to be printed on site. Third, master files are automatically synchronized with handheld devices while in range of Manhattan's hotspots provided by Verizon Wireless. Work orders, from creation to completion are now paperless. Administrator's can keep tabs on field technicians and check the status of Kiosk maintenance at any given time. Finally, the custom software has provisions to track supplies used on each Kiosk service call – both expected and additional supplies. As a result, additional supplies can be properly billed.



The Benefit

Datex Corporation's solution met and exceeded the expectations of Van Wagner Communications. Van Wagner now operates at optimum performance with adequate resources to manage the increased workload of Viacom's Manhattan Telephone Kiosk contract. Electronic work orders improved data integrity as well as streamlined the process of managing the field technicians. Administration can now dedicate more effort towards acquiring new business instead of spending time conducting mindless administrative duties. Operation and labor cost result from efficient use of scheduling and manpower. Clients are accurately billed for additional supplies needed to repair Kiosk and shrinkage is prevented.



For more information on Van Wagner, visit them on the web at:
www.vanwagner.com

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