

## National service company drops PDAs and returns to handwriting to increase efficiency!

Established in 1992, Flowrite offers a total installation and maintenance service for refrigeration systems. Its clients include household names in the licensed trade, leisure and retail industries, where it has a reputation for high quality service and fast response. Flowrite owes this largely to the dedication of its staff and to its policy of keeping pace with technology to maximise efficiency in its processes.



### Technology Led Company

Andy Moore, Flowrite's MD, was well aware of the benefits that technology can bring to any business "Flowrite has always tried to employ new technology to keep the company at the forefront of what we do".

### Pre JobFlow Process

Flowrite already had a great computer system before it started using JobFlow. It held client profiles along with job progress details, which all staff could view to answer client calls. The system ran well, but had a major weakness that Andy wanted to address; "Getting information from engineers' paperwork to the system to raise invoices was a slow, awkward process".

Engineers would complete a job sheet, phone the office with the job details which were keyed manually into the system, then return to the office once every week or two with the signed job sheets which provided authorisation for invoicing.

### The Problem

"Our engineers are great engineers, not administrators!" said Andy. "Sometimes there would be miscommunication when they called in, or paperwork would be delayed, lost in vans or, occasionally, lost completely! Andy knew that if he could get accurate information directly from site to the system, he would save admin time and increase time available for service work.

### PDAs Did Not Deliver

Andy looked for a solution, issuing PDAs which were becoming popular. After a year's struggle (engineers were unfamiliar with the technology and there were problems linking to Flowrite's system), Andy considered returning to the manual methods.

### Old Fashioned Handwriting Suggested!

In an unrelated meeting, John Hooper told Andy of JobFlow, service management software with a module that used digital pens for data input. Andy thought the pens would be an input method his engineers would be comfortable with.

Following a demonstration and an assurance from John that JobFlow could replicate Flowrite's forms and store the required information, Andy signed up. "I'd strongly recommend a demonstration because it shows just how simple the digital pen is to use, and how powerful the potential is".

### The Engineers' Favourite

"The top benefit of JobFlow for engineers says Andy, "is the traditional handwriting input they are used to, they complete the form as usual, but don't have to call the office and make fewer office visits. And, on the form, they can draw sketches to illustrate queries for technical assistance from head office support staff."



### Improved Cash Flow

Since implementing JobFlow, the Accounts team has seen a significant cash flow benefit. "Sometimes it would be weeks after a job was finished before we had sufficient information to raise an invoice. Now, invoices can be in the post within an hour of the job being signed off!"

### Live Reports

The reporting in JobFlow gives live feedback and statistics and DMS has worked with Flowrite to develop reporting options tailored to their needs, including: *Engineer Audit \* Reports by Client, Day, Engineer, Product \* Fault types, frequency by model \* Time per service, repair \* Wrong delivery analysis \* Records of particularly difficult repairs \* Information on new methods \* Individual reports for clients \* Planned maintenance reports*

### Greater Efficiency



Kate Shaw, Admin Supervisor, likes the increased efficiency and the minimal error rate in JobFlow; "Queries on forms can be raised with engineers the same day, when the job is fresh in their minds, not two weeks after the event!"

### Faster Parts Supply

For parts orders, Flowrite's JobFlow is linked, via the internet, to its major suppliers. So, when an engineer requests a part using the digital pen, the appropriate supplier can, up to a pre-agreed limit, deliver straight away without further reference to the Flowrite buyers, cutting out much administration for small orders and giving clients faster completion of their work.

### Automated Engineer Appointment Booking

Key Flowrite clients are also linked to the system and can book jobs on-line that are slotted into engineers' schedules, enabling clients to arrange convenient appointment times.