

JobFlow gets the measure of 'old school' firm

W Whiteside Limited is a reactive building maintenance company based In Liverpool; serving the North West for a host of blue chip companies, both on the high street and in the hospitality industry.

Established in 1977, Whitesides employs a team of over 20 operatives to cover a wide range of trades for a comprehensive maintenance service.



With nearly forty years of business achieved by verbal recommendation (you won't find them on the internet!), Whitesides is definitely "Old School". It has managed with a simple computerised database, pens with paper jobsheets and Sage invoicing.

Sophistication Sought

Whitesides' Commercial Manager Phil Todd explains why they needed to take on a more sophisticated system; "Although we have always been successful, the time it was taking to measure and cost work, especially on bigger jobs, was slowing us down."

JobFlow Measures Everything

Friends at a similar company in another part of the country were using JobFlow and outlined the benefits they were reaping. They had a much tighter control, with measuring and cost detail giving them accurate profit and loss figures by job and client *in real time as jobs progressed!* Plus they had a full breakdown of operatives' productive and non-productive time and a flexible stock control system that meant they rarely ran out and never overstocked. It has always been my belief that if you can't measure something, you can't manage it. It seemed that JobFlow measured everything we needed to manage!

A Framework to Run the Company

Our discussions convinced me that we needed a more powerful system and we set out to find one to suit us. We looked at several packages, with JobFlow and a web based system standing out. The web based package addressed the job management but, the more we looked at JobFlow it was clear to us that it could not only manage the jobs, but integrated a host of features that provided a framework for running the whole company! "

Starting at the Back

Using a fully integrated system was a huge step for Whitesides, whose office and on-site workers had all been used to more traditional way of working. Phil decided to introduce JobFlow

slowly, with the back office staff taking on the system first to receive and allocate work. Rather than issue tablets to operatives straight away, jobs are allocated via email to their smart phones and they continue to use the same paperwork to register works done and get a client approval signature. The sheets are returned to the office for input on JobFlow.

Lots of Rooms in JobFlow

"The great thing about JobFlow and its features is that it is like a house with lots of rooms says Phil, you open the doors and use rooms when you are ready". Whitesides has implemented job input and allocation, is trialling tablets for data collection with some operatives, but will not use the stock control until everyone is comfortable with their grasp of the features in use. Then, Whitesides will progress to vehicle management, placing orders from JobFlow, invoicing etc... with all of these features integrated and talking to each other when in use.

An Eye-opening Experience

As of February 2014, Whitesides is at its first stage of use, with operatives trialling Tablets with a full roll out planned for April. Phil Todd describes using JobFlow as an eye-opening experience; "JobFlow already holds enough information to be able to provide meaningful reports to help us manage the business. We can specify our own reports, which are accessible in real-time – I am almost addicted to running them! It has highlighted the difference between gut feel and hard facts; many areas were not quite as we thought and JobFlow has been a real eye-opener for us".

JobFlow Has a Head Start

For Whitesides, JobFlow wasn't just the best system they saw, it had a key advantage as far as Phil was concerned; "For me, the origin of JobFlow gives it a head start. The system was written by John Hooper who has first-hand experience of running a company just like Whitesides; he knows all the procedures and the issues that we face and has dealt with them comprehensively in JobFlow. When we talk to John and his team, they know where we are coming from operationally and practically, not just from a programming point of view".