

Citizen Watches Australia

Mobile Sales Force Automation Case Study



Citizen Watches

The Citizen Watch Company Ltd. was established in 1930. Citizen Watches Australia (CWA) was established in May 1965 with its head office in Brookvale, NSW. They operate across Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the South Pacific Islands.

Citizen believes that delivering excellence is the key to building successful partnerships with retailers and consumers alike. Excellence in product, marketing and service is paramount, and the resources required to achieve excellence are viewed as investments, not costs.

Citizen is, however more diverse than simply watches. In fact watches represent less than 40% of the company's total business. Today they are drawing on a heritage of proven quality and technologies as they develop the market for watches, clocks, jewellery, eyeglass frames and health care products.

The Challenge

Early in 2003, Citizen Watches Australia reviewed their primary field sales tool, a Telxon handheld mobile computer with attached printer, modem and barcode reader. This device was used by Citizen sales representatives throughout Australia to process sales orders in the field and as the device was now no longer supported by the manufacturer, Citizen were being forced to find alternative technology to replace these aging units.

Having been early adopters of mobility technology, Citizen had long experience in the benefits of using a mobile computing device in the field to capture information. Currently, when visiting their customer's premises, Citizen sales representatives would capture their customer's sales order using the barcode reader on the Telxon device and then print a copy of the order on the attached printer. After completion of their sales route for the day, the sales representative would connect to their office systems via dial-up modem, synchronise their captured sales orders and download up-to-date customer and product lists.

The data from the field devices was synchronised to a stand-alone PC running a Microsoft Windows 95 Operating System at Citizen Watches Australia's head office in Sydney. This PC was used to stage data for subsequent import / export to their IBM AS400 backend system as flat text files. This process was repeated for each sales representative with duplicate copies of the flat text files placed in different directories for each representative. Sales order and stock-take files were also copied on the AS400.

The review undertaken by Citizen identified several major issues that needed to be addressed. The existing Telxon units were bulky, difficult for users to carry and had limited display capability as they were only equipped with ASCII 9 line LCD displays. Furthermore, as the data transfer / synchronisation method had not been optimised for mobile transfer of information, **all** data on the device was being transferred during each synchronisation, resulting in long synchronisation times and large data costs. The other major issue identified was that due to their current mobile application having been written in C, any changes that needed to be made to the application to suit new business requirements were prohibitively expensive.



The issues identified during Citizen's review highlighted that they required a more flexible, feature-rich and user-friendly mobility solution for their sales representatives. It was also identified that a greater range of information needed to be made available on their mobile devices, such as detailed customer sales history and that to reduce operational costs, data transfer between field devices and the office needed to be optimised.

Following this review and being already experienced in the benefits of mobility solutions for capturing and processing field data, Citizen extensively researched, both locally and internationally, the capabilities of various software vendors and solution providers to determine the best possible mobility solution to upgrade to.

Citizen's objective was to increase service delivery levels to their customers by providing a system that would allow their sales representatives to respond more efficiently to their customer's requirements whilst they were active in the field. This would lead to increases in sales revenue and more efficient sales and customer service processes.

During their evaluation process, Citizen was introduced to Bright Software by IBM Australia, their incumbent hardware supplier. IBM Australia had previously engaged Bright Software to deliver a mobility solution to another of their key clients and following an in-depth technical review of the Bright Mobility Suite, Citizen selected Bright Software as their new mobility partner.

"The advantages of near real-time mobility application software, that's adaptable to add-on hardware, coupled with advanced database solutions that reduce costs, increase accuracy and increase the representatives' responsiveness to their customers made the Bright Software decision straight forward." Annette Stephenson, IT Manager, Citizen Watches Australia

The Solution

Citizen Watches Australia selected Bright Software because of the flexibility of the Bright Mobility Suite. Incorporating the BrightForms™ Mobile Device Engine, BrightBuilder™ Mobile Application Designer and BrightServer™ Mobility Data Gateway to interface with their back-end database system, the Bright Mobility Suite allowed Citizen to replicate the best features of their existing mobility solution, add their desired functionality enhancements and optimise the flow of information being transferred between the office and field.

The handheld component of the solution provided to Citizen replaced the legacy Telxon units with a Hewlett Packard IPAQ PDA running a Microsoft Windows Mobile 2003 Operating System. A CF slot barcode reader was inserted into the SD slot and the IPAQ was configured to communicate to a portable printer via the PDA's IR (Infrared) port.

On the server-side, an Intel Pentium IV based IBM xSeries server running a Microsoft Windows 2000 Operating System, BrightServer™ software and Microsoft SQL Server 2000 database replaced the existing PC. The BrightBuilder™ Mobile Application Designer was used to rapidly design and develop the new PDA application and BrightServer™ was configured to read Citizen's customer and inventory data directly from their AS400 system via a JDBC connection. The BrightIntegrator™ Integration Engine was also employed to export and transfer sales order and stock-take data to the AS400 system as a batch process.

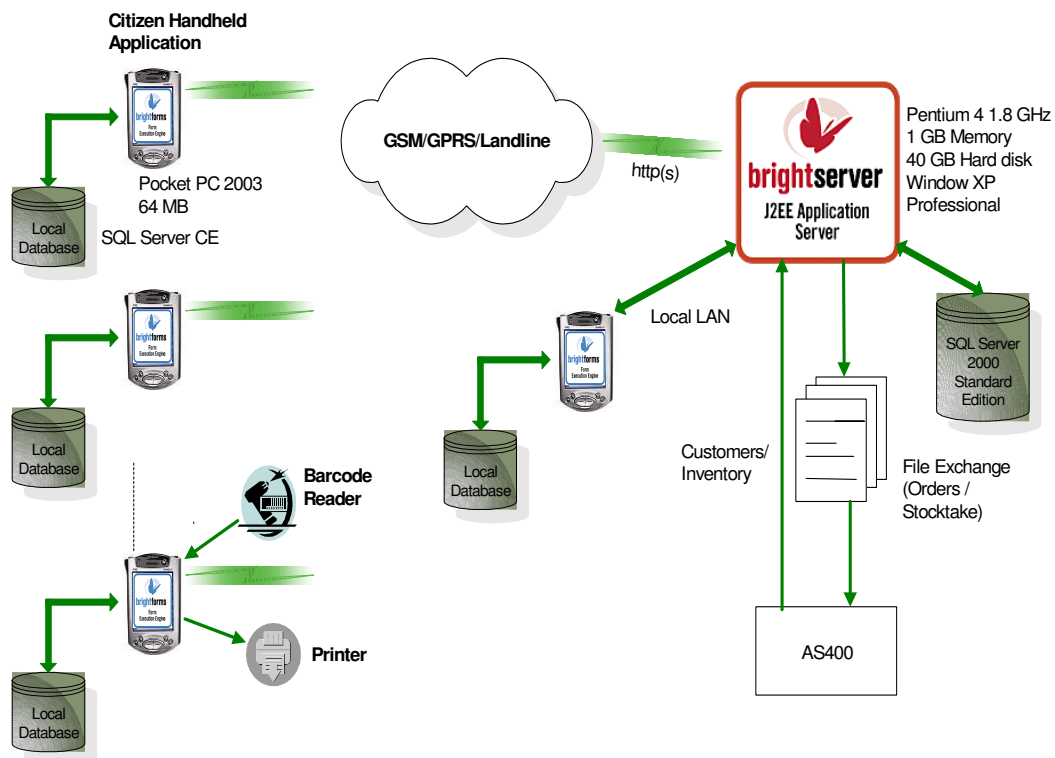
The PDA application developed using the BrightBuilder™ Mobile Application Designer was installed and run by the BrightForms™ Mobile Device Engine on the IPAQ devices. The application was configured to initiate a secure data exchange connection to Citizen's VPN via a blue-tooth enabled phone. A secure synchronisation process could then occur that enables

the sales representatives to synchronise customer and inventory data to and from their mobile device as it pertained to their assigned territory.

The mobile application provided, in addition to providing more efficient data capturing benefits, now allows Citizen sales representatives to perform extensive searches on a large range of customer and product data. Their ability to efficiently capture sales orders using the barcode reader has been enhanced as has their ability to print sales orders / receipts and perform stock-takes on customer product inventory.

Detailed training sessions were run for all staff involved in the mobility project to ensure that all team members were comfortable with the new system. Further training was also provided to key Citizen staff to equip them with the skills needed to build mobile applications using the BrightBuilder™ Mobile Application Designer. This now allows them to create their own additional mobile applications in-house if required, as well as allowing them to rapidly adapt and evolve their new mobility application as their business needs change.

Solution Architecture

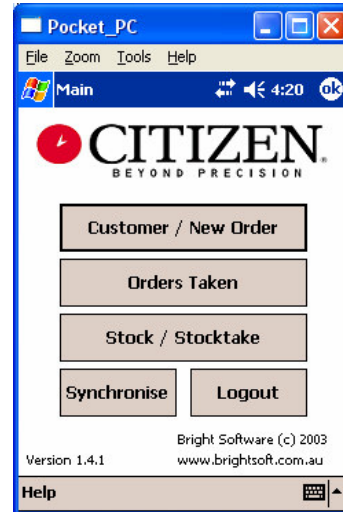


The Result

The solution provide by Bright Software has significantly increased the flexibility of Citizen's sales representatives whilst they are performing their duties in the field. By being able to access their relevant information on-demand, from any location, the sales representatives are able to more efficiently and accurately respond to their customer's requests for information. This has resulted in increased customer satisfaction levels, enabled the sales representatives to attend more customer visits during their working week, which has let to improvements in captured sales revenue.

Citizen Watches Australia now has;

- A compact and powerful mobile computing device for the field representatives to use.
- A mobile application that is efficient and easy to use coupled with rich presentation and content.
- A system which can be tailored easily by Citizen to suit new business requirements.
- A scalable mobile infrastructure for Citizen to expand as their business expands.



The Bright Software solution, developed within a 6 week timeframe, has now been deployed to all Australian states and has been operating successfully for more than 12 months without issue. The solution provided to Citizen has given them complete control over their mobility environment by equipping them with an integrated suite of tools for Citizen to adapt, modify or grow their mobility solutions quickly and cost-effectively as their business requirements evolve.

About Bright Software

Bright Software Pty Ltd, a 100% Australian specialist mobility software vendor began operations in 2002 with the defined vision to help business organisations, globally, to achieve true efficiency for their mobile workforce. To achieve this vision, Bright Software developed the "Bright Mobility Suite", an end-to-end mobility middleware platform that empowers businesses to mobilise their business data so that mobile workers can access their relevant information, on-demand. Headquartered in Sydney Australia, Bright Software continues to set the benchmark for true business application mobility.

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