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Stuart McHenery, IT Development Manager, Innserve

Innserve keeps UK beer flowing and processes jobs 50 per cent faster with Vodafone solution

Fast facts

Customer: Innserve

Web site: innservelttd.co.uk

Number of employees: 500

Country or region: United Kingdom

Industry: Hospitality and retail

Customer profile

Innserve maintains and services beer, lager and cider systems at more than 100,000 pubs and clubs across the United Kingdom.

More than 350 mobile technicians at Innserve maintain drink systems at pubs and clubs across the United Kingdom (UK). Experiencing rapid expansion, Innserve wanted to implement a new service management system that could handle up to 3,000 calls a day. With Service Hub from Vodafone, technicians can process jobs in half the time. And in just one year, back-office efficiency increased by 25 per cent. Innserve has automated key finance and HR processes so that employees have more time to focus on tasks elsewhere, such as expanding into new lines of business.

Situation

Innserve, established in 2004, brings together the in-house service departments of Carlsberg UK and Scottish & Newcastle (S&N) breweries. The company’s 500 employees manage and install drink systems at more than 100,000 pubs and clubs across the UK – ensuring the nation’s draught beer, lager and cider are always on tap.

More than 350 mobile technicians perform on-site maintenance, including critical repairs such as gas leaks or faults in main beer lines. Around 20 per cent of jobs are urgent, so it’s vital that employees across the business have real-time access to accurate information on field worker availability, location, expertise and the equipment required.

Before implementing the Vodafone solution, each technician logged completed jobs and details of parts on a personal digital assistant (PDA). This then automatically sent an update to planning employees at the company’s headquarters who scheduled new jobs based on availability. But processing each job took too long, and the system was often unable to handle all the information employees needed to log.

With a growing customer base and jobs set to exceed 300,000 annually, Innserve wanted a more efficient system that could handle different types of data.

Stuart McHenery, IT Development Manager, Innserve, says: “We needed a solution that could manage the entire supply chain, including automating manual and time-consuming finance and HR processes. Furthermore, it had to scale to meet the needs of our growing customer base, and be cost-effective for a medium-sized business.”

In addition, because Carlsberg and S&N compete with one another, Innserve needed a customisable solution that ensured data security for both its breweries. It also wanted tighter control over trades involving more than £200 million of assets.

Solution

After a rigorous evaluation process involving four main vendors, Innserve identified Vodafone as its preferred supplier. The Vodafone Service Hub solution uses the Vodafone network to give field workers a high-speed wireless connection with back-office systems.

During deployment, Innserve faced a number of challenges due to an unexpected rise in customer calls, but these were easily overcome in partnership with Vodafone. McHenery says: "Vodafone was absolutely fantastic and helped us resolve any

problems. Its consultants were always available to assist us and the company provided constant support for the entire infrastructure."

The solution handles up to 3,000 maintenance calls a day, managing daily work for Innserve's mobile workforce as well as the supply chain. It ensures all necessary parts are ordered and delivered on time and automates invoicing and financial reporting. On individual PDAs, each technician now receives automatic notification of new jobs, can view schedules, report job status, order parts, update

customer records and access detailed location and customer activity histories.

In addition to these extensive out-of-the-box features, Innserve worked with Vodafone to develop a customised finance solution that tracks asset trading between breweries, and created separate data stores to ensure the security of information.

The solution is not only used by Innserve employees. In total, around 3,000 people take advantage of the system, including subcontractors and sales people from the company's customers.

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Stuart McHenery, IT Development Manager, Innserve

Business benefits

With the Service Hub solution, Innserve can respond faster to job requests and ensure that each technician has all the necessary information and equipment for each task. McHenery says: "Just one year after implementing Service Hub, we've seen a 25 per cent increase in back-office efficiency and technicians can process jobs 50 per cent faster. It's a focal part of our business and helps us provide the best possible service for our customers."

- Technicians can process jobs twice as quickly, so they have more time to complete a greater number of jobs each day.
- Employees in the field have easy access to more types of customer information, improving service and job accuracy.
- Back-office employees have more time to focus on value-added work throughout the business, thanks to a 25 per cent increase in efficiency.

- Carlsberg and S&N receive valuable reassurance that business data is secure.

- Technicians can access the system wherever a wireless internet service is available, without connecting to a terminal.

- System expands easily to support an increase in jobs as the two main breweries continue to grow and Innserve reaches out to new breweries.

- Vodafone provides ongoing valuable advice and consultancy as well as ensuring a successful implementation.

- Based on efficiency gains, the company is investigating new areas for expansion such as energy saving devices to cool cellars.

- The company can buy and sell assets between breweries more easily with a customised trading solution.

- New customers are integrated into the system quickly and easily, ensuring the best possible service.

- The company has better visibility into operations across the business with automated reports.

- External personnel use the solution's powerful features to improve their own working practices, sharing the same information as Innserve's employees.

- System supports the company as an industry market leader by ensuring it provides the best possible service compared to competitors.

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