



BACKGROUND

The Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) is one of the largest organizations responsible for electrical safety inspections in Ontario, Canada. Any time a consumer or contractor makes a change to their electrical services, an ESA field technician needs to verify that the job was done safely in accordance with the Ontario Electrical Safety Code.

CHALLENGE

ESA has always been forward-thinking when it came to mobile technology. They implemented a Windows-based mobile inspection program called MEPS back in 1995 when other companies did not even have mobile automation on their information technology radar. MEPS was an excellent first start at mobile automation.

In 2000, ESA migrated to SAP's CRM mobile solution that was interfaced to an SAP R/3 backend implementation. The mobile solution was challenging right from the start, from difficulty to customize the solution and attain full functionality, to concerns regarding data integrity and ability to support the solution. ESA experienced very long data transfer rates, sluggish performance on inspector's laptop and an inability to make changes to accommodate evolving business needs.

Mark Taylor, Director of IT at ESA was tasked with finding a replacement solution. ESA issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to 10 vendors who would be measured against such decision criteria as:

- **The ability to interface with SAP**
- **Short startup/sync times**
- **Implementation costs**
- **Ongoing maintenance costs**
- **Ability to own the entire solution upon project completion**
- **Ability to customize the application**

PROFILE:

- Administrative authority mandated by the Government of Ontario
- Electrical safety regulator

CHALLENGE:

- Reduce data transmission times between Mobile and SAP.
- Increase data entry speed
- Increase flexibility to adapt to changes in ESA's business model

SOLUTION:

- 200 electrical inspectors use FieldWorker to manage 3 lines of business (Wiring inspections, Continuous Safety Services and Field Training), handling over 350,000 notifications and over 3 million SAP transactions per year.

RESULTS:

- Extends productive hours of field workers
- Administration and support costs reduced
- Leverages existing application to serve needs of multiple departments

SOLUTION

The final two candidates that met the RFP selection criteria were SAP's new mobile technology, and FieldWorker Enterprise. The two companies were requested to develop a proof-of-concept (POC) solution in four weeks to help ESA measure the viability of each proposal.

"FieldWorker was able to deliver on the key POC criteria and their performance compared to our benchmarks gave us confidence that the solution would meet our project goals," said Mark Taylor, when describing the POC results.

While providing a robust enterprise resource planning environment, SAP architecture lacks certain flexibility. This meant that SAP customers were cautious with incorporating external mobile solutions in a "best-of-breed" approach. However, when FieldWorker and Illumiti accepted the challenge and delivered a working solution within 120 calendar days complete with the addition of enhanced FieldWorker Platform functionality ESA was rewarded with a mobile solution that meet all their project goals.

RESULTS

Some technical achievements on this project:

- **Over 45 custom SAP BAPIs**
- **32 custom validation rules**
- **16 custom data entry macros**
- **15 custom quick searches**
- **4 ESA specific screen layouts**
- **2 printed reports**
- **A custom real-time query to bring in work orders from other inspectors**
- **350,000 notifications per year**
- **3 million SAP transactions processed per year**

This successful deployment in the most demanding system environments makes using FieldWorker Enterprise in other enterprise solutions like Oracle, PeopleSoft and JD Edwards a viable lower cost alternative for mobile automation.

"This was a landmark project at ESA. It was on time, on budget and on quality. It truly delivered what it set out to do. The field technicians were skeptical and had every right to be. They were completely blown away by the solution, and so were the Executive Group and The Board. This project gave the IT department a great deal of credibility,"
said Mark Taylor, Director of IT at ESA.

In 2006, ESA was honored as a program finalist in the prestigious annual Computerworld Honors Program.

"ESA has been a big supporter of FieldWorker and we are extremely happy that both of our companies are getting recognition for this solution," said Peter Neve, President of FieldWorker. "FieldWorker Enterprise continues to get rave reviews from the 250 ESA inspectors who rely on our technology every day".

Mark Taylor, Director of IT for ESA reacted to being nominated for this award: "I am honored to have been nominated for the Computerworld Honors Program. That my peers have recognized that some good work, some valuable work was done, means a lot."