



Ecolab Ecolab Cleans Up with iMobile Suite from Synchrologic

Ecolab is the leader in providing specialized products and services to restaurants, office buildings, grocery stores, schools, commercial laundries, hospitals and other places you visit frequently. Founded in 1923, Ecolab has built a multi-billion dollar business by providing commercial facilities with solutions for cleaning, sanitizing, pest elimination, and maintenance. Which means you enjoy safer food and cleaner surroundings – every day.



Ecolab’s business is driven by their premiere sales-and-service team. These experts work closely with their customers to assess operations on-site and recommend customized solutions. These solutions typically include multiple components: services, chemicals, equipment, process standards, and operational reporting. Ecolab boasts the largest and best-trained team in the industry – over 10,000 field associates worldwide.

Business Opportunity

Technology has always played a critical role in driving Ecolab’s growth, important for both new products and improved processes. Eager to maintain their competitive edge, Ecolab’s Information Services team works closely with business unit technical liaisons to identify opportunities to help the sales-and-service team be more effective.

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*Karen Johnson
IT Leader, Ecolab*

Industry	Applications	Products
Specialized Products & Services	Multiple CRM Applications	iMobile Suite



Despite a powerful Intranet site, and plenty of paper-based reporting systems, associates in the field felt they would benefit from more pervasive information access. Thankfully, in recent years mobile devices had quickly evolved in terms of storage, form factor, modems, and processing power. The technology had finally caught up with Ecolab's vision for an exciting new breed of powerful mobile applications. A variety of projects were further investigated for cost-justification and prioritization.

"From our headquarters in St. Paul, we continually survey users and talk with management to establish goals and requirements," comments Tom Matejcek, Project Manager for Ecolab Mobile Field Solutions. "It became clear that a layer of infrastructure software would be essential to the success of our mobile initiatives."



Mobile Solutions

Ecolab's Textile Care division provides cleaning and sanitizing solutions to large on-premise and commercial laundries. Local Territory Managers (TMs) visit potential and current clients, capturing data about the laundry operations. This information is used for proposing custom solutions that will help ensure operations are fully optimized.



After an internal evaluation and consultation with Gartner Group, we selected Synchrologic's iMobile Suite to provide the necessary data sync, file distribution, and systems management capabilities.



*Tom Matejcek,
Project Manager, Ecolab*

One of Ecolab's first mobile priorities was to create a tool for the TMs to facilitate the information gathering and solution design processes. The application, named EcoPort, would help to better serve existing customers and more effectively secure new clients.

"We built EcoPort using our standard PC application technologies – it was written in Visual Basic and MS Access, and SQL Server as the back-end central database here at corporate," explains Joan Stevens, Mobile Field Solutions Project Lead. "Synchrologic solved the challenge of synchronizing each Territory Manager's particular subset of the central database to their particular device. Luckily their SQL code writer made it easy to configure these rules."

The application allows Ecolab staff to gather information and configure the custom solution for presentation, all in one site visit. A common scenario might involve a visit to a

prospect. EcoPort can help the TM identify unnecessarily high water temperatures and long rinse cycles caused by use of second-rate cleaning products. The custom solution proposed would include high quality Ecolab cleaning formulas that allow equipment operation at lower temperatures for shorter cycles. The client is enabled to lower heating and water costs dramatically – providing an overall cost savings.

With current customers, important operations data is captured and synchronized with the corporate headquarters. For some clients this includes billing data, so EcoPort allows receivables to be invoiced more quickly. The application will also help Ecolab satisfy existing customers by ensuring that service level agreements for site visits are being met. Also, equipment failures are tracked to facilitate diagnosis, with correction often based on adoption of additional Ecolab solutions.

EcoPort was an early success proving the value of mobile computing technologies and Synchrologic's mobile infrastructure solution. Next, Ecolab's team of mobile technology visionaries moved forward with a project to support the Institutional division. This division is Ecolab's largest with 2,500 field sales-and-service associates providing a wide range of services to the hospitality and foodservice industries. Each of these Territory Managers (TMs) reports to a District Manager (DM) who is responsible for ensuring their success.

ADVANTAGE

BENEFITS

A large percentage of a DM's time is spent in the field servicing and seeking customers alongside their TM reports. In the past, a District Manager would spend time before each trip reviewing a thick binder of paper reports. They would collate information from multiple reports into a picture of the activity, opportunities and challenges in the TM's territory. Preparation for district staff meetings involved similar activity.

"Our goal was to extend our existing enterprise application data to the mobile devices, eliminating the need to produce paper reports, and sparing District Managers from manual collation of reports to get the analytics and information they needed," states Karen Johnson, Information Technology Leader for the Institutional Division. "The application, DM Toolbox, was created based on feedback regarding the potential value of over 20 different possible modules. Initially we targeted the top 5 requests, and based on the exceptionally favorable user feedback, we plan to invest in building additional capabilities."

With the DM Toolbox application, a District Manager can quickly examine activity in a targeted territory before visiting. They identify patterns in the data to help focus their coaching and training. For instance, the DM may note that a TM has done a good job of new customer acquisition, but there is room for further revenue growth by focusing on promoting a new product to existing customers. While traveling alongside a TM, questions that arise can now be answered quickly. At district meetings, the application is used to display graphics showing relative performance of each associate.

Business Benefits

EcoPort has provided a competitive advantage by allowing the Territory Managers to provide unmatched service levels with instant information and recommendations. The application has also helped shorten sales-cycles, and allowed staff to "close the deal" on the first visit – before competition can intervene.

"We predicted a payback period of less than a year for the Synchrologic-powered EcoPort application," highlights Johnson. "This was solely related to the cost reduction from eliminating the old paper forms and the data entry effort they created here at corporate, and didn't include other expected benefits."

These other benefits included a reduced effort for manual report creation at corporate, elimination of manual backups of the local databases on the client devices, and decreased effort required for monitoring compliance with service level agreements. In the future, the centralized operations data may also be published via Extranet to the customer, allowing Ecolab to further differentiate their leading services.

The DM Toolbox likewise offered several benefits to Ecolab's largest division.

"The DM Toolbox application allowed us to extend existing enterprise data stores out to the mobile device, so that our District Managers don't have to spend time sifting through paper reports or dialing into headquarters for answers," explains Janelle Shugart, Field Projects and Systems Manager, of Ecolab's Institutional division.

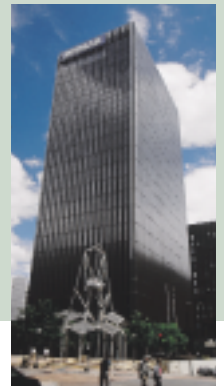
"Synchrologic's technology makes it all possible, resulting in better-informed District Managers who spend more time on higher value-added coaching and mentoring activities."

Elimination of the cost of creating and mailing the printed reports, as well as time savings from eliminating manual collation of the printed reports were other major benefits.

The Future

With a string of high visibility successes in place, Ecolab is energized to grow the capabilities of their mobile computing systems portfolio. The user community has been excited by the new tools, and has begun providing a steady stream of ideas about how mobile technology could help them be more productive.

"Synchrologic has proven themselves a valuable platform partner in helping Ecolab to arm our field sales-and-service team with cutting edge tools," notes Matejcek. "With the mobile infrastructure we've put in place, we're able to more easily and quickly and cost-effectively seize new opportunities to deploy additional information, while maximizing our return on investment in mobile technology."



About Synchrologic, Inc.

Synchrologic provides solutions that give mobile workers the information they need, wherever and whenever they need it. By delivering the most powerful enterprise mobile and wireless infrastructure software available, Synchrologic's comprehensive product suite supports all aspects of mobile computing while lowering the total cost of implementing, managing, and supporting enterprise mobile initiatives.

The company's infrastructure solution hides the complexity inherent in supporting a mobile network. It features all the tools necessary to architect and implement a mobile strategy - including Email, address book, tasks, to-do, and calendar synchronization; systems management; software distribution; data synchronization; file distribution; intranet publishing; and personalized mobile data. Synchrologic solutions are uniquely flexible in allowing pervasive access to vital business information from any device, for any application, over any connection - wireline or wireless.

Synchrologic offers an intuitive and user-friendly experience, robust administrative capabilities, open platform architecture, and the only comprehensive mobile infrastructure solution available for handhelds, laptops, and future devices. The company's product suite generates a variety of benefits including better information, increased user productivity, improved IT resource management, lowered cost of ownership, and reduced communication costs.

Synchrologic's unparalleled technology is the winning product of over five years' experience supporting mobile and wireless initiatives for over 150 world-class corporate and OEM customers including Citicorp, Domino's, Hertz, FedEx, 3M, and Nintendo. The company is privately held with headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia.

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