



Tracking solution gives Linde a real lift

Case Study: Linde Material Handling

The Optus Mobile Data Network is helping solve logistical headaches for Linde Material Handling, the world's second-largest manufacturer of forklift trucks.

Introduction

With about 7000 customers located around Australia, the popularity of Linde's forklifts and pallet stackers presents a challenge for the company's service department and specialist mobile technicians, particularly in remote regional districts.

James Withey, General Manager for Linde's Australian operations, says achieving greater business control of all assets has been crucial for the company as it "picks, packs and dispatches" parts.

"If a particular van is out of sight and out of mind, you're not utilising it properly," he says. "You're not getting the best return on that asset. From our perspective, if we can see what that vehicle or service technician is doing at any point in time, that makes our life easier."

OPTUS BUSINESS

'yes'
OPTUS

To better manage its resources and cut paper trails, Linde turned to existing communications provider, Optus, which as lead partner facilitated an alliance between Linde and Datalink, a Melbourne-based, web software development company.

Phil Harker, Director, Mobile Data and GPS Systems at Datalink, says Linde's logistical dilemma "fell smack bang into the middle of our strength".

With Optus providing the telecommunications infrastructure, Datalink created a solution to fit all Linde vans with a system called the Linde Van Terminal, a communications device that passes messaging information via satellite to its control function. The system provides accurate and real-time information about Linde's parts and technicians and is able to collate inventory information allowing their customers to order more stock if necessary.

"So Linde is in the 21st century in terms of being able to control its jobs, control its stock, control its invoicing," Harker says. "And therefore [it is] very, very competitive."

Running on a reliable Optus platform, the system also tracks the all-important movements of Linde technicians.

James Withey, General Manager, Linde Material Handling, says the system uses a GPS mapping mechanism so controllers can pinpoint the location of vans and transfer this information via the Optus GPRS network.

"We'll not only know whether the technician is busy, we'll know whether he's travelling, at what speed he's travelling," Withey says. "We know whether he's so many hours into working through a job. And we'll also know exactly when he's going to complete that job. And he will provide the customer with a receipt to say thank you very much – a printed receipt from the van."

Withey says the system has delivers "response-time benefits" to Linde and its customers. The fact that Linde was recently awarded two sizeable national deals proves their service delivery is best in market.

"I think a lot of companies can go out and promote that they have a service capability. We can now prove it."

The role of Optus in managing the system and business relationships has been vital.

"The willingness to come and sit at my side of the table and understand what my problems are has enabled [Optus] to deliver the solution that we really needed," Withey says.

He advises other businesses to consider such alliances with trusted partners such as Optus.

"If you want to grow and you want to succeed and you want to have a profitable business, you've got to continue to look for ways to improve," he says. "And any business should be trying to do that."

The Challenge

To better monitor Linde vans and technicians in metropolitan and regional areas enabling fast and more cost-efficient service of clients.

The Solution

Using a solution delivered via the Optus GPRS network, Linde gains access to real-time information about parts and technicians.

The Outcome

Increased visibility and tracking enables Linde to better control costs, while less paperwork and a streamlined process has resulted in greater productivity and profits.

Further Information

If you want to discuss how Optus can help you increase productivity and control of your business assets through innovative communications solutions, contact your Optus Account Manager, call our hotline on 1800 555 937 or visit our website at optusbusiness.com.au.