

Case study

Stanley Steemer

Stanley Steemer
Streamlines Field
Service Operations



At a glance

Industry: Field Service

Application: Salesforce Automation

Handheld computers decrease job times, improve dispatch efficiencies and help better manage company assets

Stanley Steemer performs on-site carpet cleaning and floor-care services nationwide. Thousands of technicians are in the field daily fulfilling orders, selling, routing to various job sites, and recording and reporting completed transactions back to a central office. The task of managing all of these transactions and company assets can be daunting.

For decades, Stanley Steemer relied on a paper-based process for order taking and fulfillment, payment processing and dispatch. The process was time consuming and at times inaccurate.

In the mid-1990s, Stanley Steemer International, Inc. began researching hardware and working with prototype applications to move the company's system from a paper solution to an electronic process. Stanley Steemer first trialed consumer-grade handheld computers and implemented a prototype system in 2002. This system proved ineffective because of the device's lower durability in comparison to a ruggedized commercial-grade solution. Stanley Steemer also quickly learned that this type of system lacked many of the capabilities inherent in a commercial-grade device.

"We learned quickly that this type of equipment wasn't going to work because of durability and capability limitations," said Dale Bevins, IT Director, Stanley Steemer International, Inc. "We determined that deploying a commercial-grade handheld computer to meet the challenging demands placed on the equipment was our only option."

In 2005, Stanley Steemer turned to Intermec for the company's ruggedized Intermec 761 handheld computers and PW40 mobile credit card printers. Stanley Steemer now uses more than 900 Intermec handheld computers, printers and accessories at over 60 different branches, satellites and franchises across the U.S. and estimates a complete branch/satellite rollout by January 2007. To help monitor assets, Stanley Steemer has also deployed WebTech GPS boxes mounted inside Stanley Steemer service vehicles.

As a result of this implementation, Stanley Steemer is quickly realizing dramatic labor savings, reducing the time it takes to complete a job and enjoying a more accurate and easier data management process.



In the Field

The Intermec handhelds have helped many Stanley Steemer branches, satellites and franchises to reduce the time it takes to fulfill an order, and to do so with greater accuracy. With the old system, field technicians would call the details of a job or new order into dispatch via two-way radios. Orders and payments were also processed in the field via paper-based forms. Errors were more likely to occur under this system due to a lost or diminished radio signal or by poor handwriting or human math error.

Under the new system, employees can simply enter and receive order information directly from the Intermec handheld which communicates with the local head office via a cellular connection. Credit card payments can also be processed easily using the handheld computers and credit card printers.

"Using the new handhelds has helped us eliminate between 40 minutes and 1 hour and 20 minutes per truck per day in time spent on paperwork and communicating with dispatch," said Jeff Trisciani, Stanley Steemer District Manager, Greater New York. "We run up to 60 trucks per day, so the daily time savings is huge. This has really helped eliminate overtime costs. We're estimating saving between \$300 and \$700 per week in overtime costs alone."

Mark Gerken, Stanley Steemer Branch Manager, Philadelphia, agrees: "We're saving at least five minutes per job and run between 120 and 150 jobs per day - that's allowing us to save nearly 12.5 hours per day. The handhelds have stopped bottlenecks at dispatch to allow crews to get to their jobs faster. Our crews also no longer have to call the head office to let dispatch know when

they have arrived or to let them know they are leaving. This has allowed us to handle more jobs. We're now running 27 trucks instead of 21 trucks per day."

In the Office

The handhelds have also made life easier at the head office. The new handhelds automatically enter the information from the field directly into a central computer system. The information is sent to the head office from the handheld computer via a cellular connection. This reduces human error as well as the amount of time necessary to report and record information.

"We had three full-time dispatchers. This system allowed us to go to two," Trisciani stated. "This saved us \$32,000 per year in salary. The system also produces more professional-looking paperwork for our customers."

Gerken enjoys similar benefits: "This system makes things easier and not so hectic in the office. The time savings allowed us to not hire another full-time dispatcher. This would've cost us between \$30,000 and \$40,000 per year."

Asset Tracking

Stanley Steemer is also using handhelds in conjunction with the WebTech GPS boxes as a way to monitor its assets. The solution allows Stanley Steemer to easily monitor the location of each of its trucks and the status of its equipment. This allows Stanley Steemer to understand exactly where each of its trucks is at any given time, and know whether the cleaning machines are in use or not.

"If someone is missing, we can find them," Gerken said. "It's also great for asset management. We can find out

where our trucks are, how fast they are going and what they are doing."

The system also helps crews get to their jobs more quickly. The GPS mapping system provides accurate directions to each new job location.

Regional Benefits, Company-Wide Savings

As each branch and region continues to successfully rollout the Intermec handhelds and WebTech boxes, Stanley Steemer anticipates it will realize dramatic time and cost savings nationwide. The solution also makes work easier for Stanley Steemer employees.

Two Stanley Steemer branches enjoy the following benefits:

Greater New York branch and satellites:

- Eliminated between 40 minutes and 1 hour and 20 minutes per truck per day in time spent on paperwork and communicating with dispatch
- Saves between \$300 and \$700 per week, per crew in overtime costs. Across 60 crews and 50 weeks, the savings could add up to as much as \$2.1 million annually
- Eliminated the need for a full-time dispatcher to save \$32,000 per year in salary

Philadelphia branch and satellites:

- Saves five minutes per job - runs between 120 and 150 jobs per day to save nearly 12.5 hours daily
- Contributed to the ability to expand operations from running 21 trucks per day to 27
- Eliminated the need to hire a new dispatcher to provide anticipated savings of between \$30,000 and \$40,000 per year

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