

Client Profile



Founded in 1935, Roto-Rooter is the largest provider of plumbing and drain cleaning services in North America. In 1980, the Blanc family sold Roto-Rooter to Cincinnati-based Chemed Corporation, and Roto-Rooter moved its headquarters to Cincinnati. In 1986, Roto-Rooter was spun off as a public company, with Chemed retaining majority ownership.

Industry

Field Service – Plumbing

Region

Americas

Roto-Rooter increases productivity among field service plumbing technicians

The Challenge

Roto-Rooter plumbing technicians perform daily service calls and document all work orders and invoices with pen and paper. Once completed, the documents are taken to the office where they are scanned and the data manually entered into the billing management system. The challenge was that often forms were left at customer sites, forgotten to be turned in or would require follow up to get the complete information. This would negatively impact account receivables. The paper based process also made managing parts inventory and usage difficult. Each truck is equipped with a range of parts for different types of jobs. Technicians are required to manage their truck's parts usage and inventory — tracking and documenting parts by job and determining reorder points. This task was tedious for the technician and often a low priority as successfully finishing the job was their primary objective. Inventory inaccuracies led to some vehicles with excessive inventory and others with deficiencies requiring parts to be shuttled around or jobs being delayed.

The Solution

Our partner, Famhost, integrated and managed the ExpeData® Digital Writing Platform for Roto-Rooter. Now, the plumbing technician simply fills out the proposal, work order, or parts order form with a digital pen. The handwriting is captured and transmitted via a Bluetooth®-enabled mobile phone to the Famhost system. The office staff receives the electronic form before the driver even gets back to the truck.



Partner Profile



Famhost is a family of business-critical hosted applications sold as a service from a secure server farm. The main application (JaRay's SBMS-Service Business Management System) includes dispatching, billing, payroll, complaint and customer follow-up, inventory, purchase orders, job history, job costing, productivity analysis, etc.

The Solution Continued

It is processed immediately and if there are any questions, the driver is called before they leave the site. Once a digital form is submitted, the color of the driver's name on the workstation changes to indicate there are forms available for processing. The user clicks on the driver's name and the forms are displayed with the interpretation of what the driver wrote. The document is attached to the customer's record and the data is entered into the system automatically. At the end of the day, inventory items are automatically updated and a PO is generated and sent to the appropriate parts supplier for 'just in time' replenishment.

The Results

The time to process invoices and initiate billing was reduced from four days to the same day, improving cash flow. Job costing and billing are more accurate and timely. The inventory in the vehicles was reduced and turns improved. Inventory is automatically replenished, optimizing the technician's time as they are not chasing down missing parts or restocking their vehicles. Customer service is improved as technicians have what they need to service their customers and don't have to return to home office for parts or reschedule visits.

As a result of the success of ExpeData Digital Writing, Roto-Rooter is expanding digital pen and paper use for employment applications, vehicle maintenance check lists, and credit card/check processing.

“This solution allows our field technicians to realize tremendous productivity gains without having to go through the learning curve typically associated with new technology. We've eliminated the problems associated with waiting for paperwork to be turned in.”

Rita Campbell (Wichita KS)



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