



TEPH SEAL

Automobile Detailer Reduces Labour Costs, Automates Billing Procedures, and Streamlines Payroll Processes with Mobile Technology

Teph Seal provides automobile detailing and refurbishing services for over 400 car dealerships across the United States. With over 2,000 employees that work inside their clients' dealerships, operations management is extremely challenging.

"The automation capabilities of our handheld solution have allowed us to cut labor costs by 10% to 15%. With our labor costs exceeding \$1 million a month, this solution will save us more than \$1 million in labor alone in its first year of use. The solution also enables us to receive 85% of our billing data the same day the service is performed as opposed to waiting weeks for service paperwork under our old method. Faster access to data enables us to bill customers in a more timely fashion, which improves our cash flow. Finally, because human error has been eliminated from the process, we have been able to achieve 100% billing accuracy." — John Tricoli, President, Teph Seal

The Challenge

For over 26 years, Teph Seal used manual paper-based processes to track service fulfillment, customer billing, and employee payroll. There were three major problems with this system. First, billing inaccuracies were common as a result of human error. By simply recording a vehicle identification number (VIN) incorrectly, a dealer could deny receiving services and refuse to pay. Second, the manual process was extremely slow because data had to be physically transported in paper form. "Corporate accounting employees used to make dozens of calls every week trying to track down paperwork we needed to bill our customers. This created delays in our billing cycle that negatively impacted our cash flow," says John Tricoli, President of Teph Seal. Finally, the manual system allowed employees to take liberties with company processes. For example, Teph Seal managers would sometimes negotiate their own pricing, which resulted in billing discrepancies and unmet customer expectations.

The Solution

Teph Seal equipped its workers with Psion Teklogix WORKABOUT PRO rugged

handheld computers. Under the new system, employees use their handheld to scan the VIN barcode, which automatically captures important vehicle information. A special program within the application prevents handhelds from scanning the same VIN twice, thus eliminating the possibility of double-billing for the same vehicle.

The handheld is also used to input which services were performed for what dealership. Costs are programmed into the handheld application by corporate and cannot be changed by individual employees. Once the service is completed, the dealer signs a signature screen to verify the work has been done to its satisfaction and to authorize billing. At the end of each workday, the data from each handheld is downloaded to Teph Seal's central database, which generates billing data for the accounting department and automatically creates invoices for dealers.

The Benefits

Teph Seal now centrally controls pricing and has automated billing and payroll procedures. These capabilities have helped the company reduce labour costs by 10% to 15% while achieving 100% billing accuracy.

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Improved service tracking has elevated Teph Seal's reputation with its clients and contributed to added business. According to Tricoli, "With the handheld application, we can now create service reports that detail the services we provide our customers. On one particular occasion, one of our service reports indicated that we were repeatedly detailing one vehicle an inordinate amount of times. It turns out an employee of the dealership was using the vehicle for their own personal transportation and putting the car back in the service line each day to be detailed. The dealer was so impressed

we were able to alert him of this act that he contracted our services for the rest of his dealerships.”



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