

MDKS

The Complete Solution
For Your Growing Business



Client Profile

MDKS Develops Well-Groomed Solution For Mitchell Property Maintenance

Palm Handheld Application Boosts Efficiency

Mitchell Property Maintenance in Millbank, Ontario, is busy year-round. For half the year the company's crews are busy mowing and grooming the lawns and yards of its commercial customers. As the season changes, its snow plow crew is kept busy clearing parking lots and driveways. Uncharacteristically for its industry, Mitchell Property Maintenance has embraced technology and uses it to increase efficiency and improve accuracy. Mitchell Property Maintenance turns to MDKS Business Solutions for its technological needs.

Buried Under Paperwork

During busy times, the crews at Mitchell Property Maintenance work seven days—and nights—a week. Each crew might perform work for several customers during their shift, recording their activities on work tickets. The result was paperwork, and lots of it. "I was faced with a mound of paperwork each week," recalls Gary Snider of Mitchell Property Maintenance. "There were hundreds of work tickets that recorded who had worked, for what client they worked, what service was performed, what equipment was used, and the time spent."

Snider had to sort through the papers, and then begin feeding all this data into a series of spreadsheets. "It took me hours and hours every week," he says.

Plowing Out From Under

A colleague in the wholesale flower industry described their solution to the paperwork nightmare and Snider was inspired. "They had a company develop an application that ran on Palm handheld devices. Their drivers used it to record deliveries



and sales," Snider explains. "We have field personnel like they do, and I thought a handheld application like this could work for us as well."

The colleague recommended MDKS, the business consulting firm that developed their application. Snider was impressed with MDKS. "They are a talented group," he says. "We met and spent time discussing what we needed the application to do, and MDKS designed and programmed the ideal solution for us."

Solution In The Palm Of Their Hands

Maintain-IT, the complete business management application MDKS developed for Mitchell Property Management, includes software for the Palm handheld devices and a desktop component to accept the input from the devices and process it into customer invoices.

Maintain-IT has proven easy for the staff to use. After selecting a customer, the handheld

*Mitchell Property
Maintenance*

Headquarters:

Millbank, Ontario

Industry:

Property Maintenance

Solution:

Maintain-IT from MDKS

About
MDKS Business Solutions

MDKS Business Solutions Inc. is one of the largest independent accounting and professional service firms in Southern Ontario specializing in the selection and implementation of ERP systems for mid size organizations of various industries in all of North America.

Our professionals have extensive expertise in financial accounting and operations, business intelligence and reporting, CRM (Customer Relationship Management), manufacturing, eCommerce, custom software development, and IT infrastructure deployment.

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device immediately begins tracking time. Any notes relating to this customer appear and customer preferences or cautions pop up to ensure they are read. Staff chooses the services performed from a drop-down list and records any materials used. Even non-chargeable time such as lunch breaks or equipment breakdowns is recorded on the Palm, turning the handheld device into a complete time tracking solution. “It’s given us better visibility and control of our labor costs,” notes Snider.

Streamline Invoicing

At the end of a shift, employees bring their handheld devices to the office where Snider downloads the data into the desktop application - a process which takes literally a few seconds for each driver. “When billing time comes, the application automatically produces invoices which are accurate and include the detail our customers like to see,” says Snider. The Maintain-IT desktop application is then able to interface with various accounting packages to transfer the invoices electronically.

“I spend a quarter of the time I used to on billing and time-collection tasks,” says Snider. He also points out that getting invoices out on time and with no errors means faster collections, and happier customers. “With a winter like this last one, I don’t know how we could have possibly survived without the Palm handhelds and Maintain-IT,” Snider adds.

Profitable Business Intelligence

The new system has proven to be more than a data collection and billing system; now Snider is able to access key metrics about his operation which allow

him to make more informed business decisions.

Many of the Mitchell Property Maintenance customers purchase an annual service contract. Previously it took hours to analyze the profitability of the contracts at renewal time. “I’d have to go through a year’s worth of work tickets adding up the time and money and number of visits we invested in each contract,” Snider says. “Now I can run a report that gives me that information and much more. I can see averages, trends, and other data that helps me set correct pricing for the contract renewals.”

Leverage The Solution

MDKS has recently added some additional functionality to Maintain-IT to help Mitchell Property Maintenance meet the Ministry of Transport requirement for daily vehicle safety checks. Now, before taking a truck or snow plow out of the company’s lot, staff will perform and store the results of their safety checklists on their Palm devices.

And Snider has expanded the use of the handheld devices by using Google Maps to capture an aerial image of the work site, loading the image on the handheld and then marking the area where the work is to take place. “It eliminates guesswork and potentially costly mistakes,” says Snider.

Snider praises MDKS for developing a powerful and intuitive application that meshes perfectly with the company’s workflow. “We are saving time and operating more efficiently,” he concludes. “With Maintain-IT, we are now in a position where we can expand our business considerably without adding administrative resources.”

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