



Creative Field Marketing

Mobile auditing solution delivers real-time data and images for marketing and communications agency

Creative Field Marketing (CFM) is one of Australia's largest marketing and communications agencies, representing clients such as Optus, American Express, Foxtel, Mattel, LG, MGM Sony and Virgin Blue.



The Challenge

CFM has up to 1,000 field staff working on a large number of client-specific programs and a portable, simple and highly-reliable method of recording and communicating data among staff and clients is crucial. The paper-based reporting system previously used was time-consuming and complicated. A more cost-effective, streamlined process that gave consistent results was needed.

"Creative Field Marketing needed to ensure all field staff used the same audit evaluation processes when in-store so that clients could have a clearer and more accurate understanding of how they were positioned in the market.

"Retail is an aggressive market and clients need to know immediately what is happening in the field. With the previous paper-based system, clients couldn't have access to market trends until the end of each month," said Robert Elliot, general manager, Creative Field Marketing.

Because each program CFM conducts is unique to that client, CFM needed a versatile method of data delivery and analysis that would cater to individual client needs.

Elliot continued, "Creative Field Marketing is a leader in providing information about client representation in retail outlets. We had to ensure our mobile solution would enable us to maintain a competitive advantage in a growing market."

The Solution

The 1,000 members of CFM's Field Sales and Marketing Division use a range of Palm Treo™ 650 smartphones and Palm® Tungsten™ handhelds when they visit retail outlets around Australia to conduct audits of how their clients are represented in-store.

Information about stock levels and how clients' products are displayed on shelves versus competitors, is recorded, and feedback to clients in real time. Staff equipped with a Treo 650 smartphone can take digital pictures of how clients' and competitors' are presented. This gives CFM's clients accurate data for decision-making and a greater knowledge of how they are being positioned in the market by retailers.

"Creative Field Marketing staff needed something small, lightweight, had the robustness to be reliable on the road and in some cases where customer's requested it, a device that was photo-capable. Being the most developed handheld and smartphone system available, Palm was the obvious choice," said Elliot.

CFM, working closely with Sync International, developed a software solution that let them tailor data capture for each client. By customising the interface, CFM field staff could follow checks and balances specialised to each client to produce consistent results. For example, staff are able to provide clients with details regarding how many point of sale materials, wobblers and posters are featured in-store compared to their competitors.

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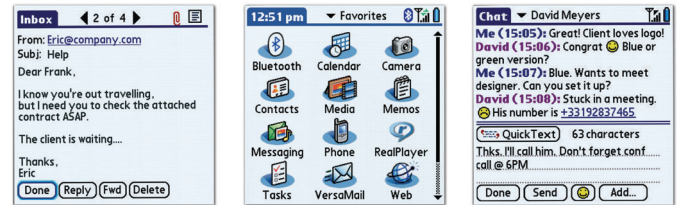
Robert Elliot, general manager, Creative Field Marketing.

According to Steven Prior, director, Sync International: "Sync's sales Merchant was developed with CFM to give staff wireless access to a central database in real time. The combination of this software and Palm handhelds and smartphones allows them to easily source and relay critical information back to central databases and the client. This includes photo images captured by Treo 650 smartphones showing product placement and sales displays."

The Outcome

CFM is now communicating more effectively with clients, producing more consistent results than ever before and delivering multi-media information to clients on a daily basis. Clients can even access CFM's field team's planned store inspections via journey planning software on the Palm handhelds. This gives client sales executives total transparency as to when store visits will occur.

"The Palm smartphones and handhelds have become our clients' eyes and ears in the field. The Treo's digital camera technology lets us produce highly illustrative reports on channel actions that include images of in-store displays. This gives our clients a high degree of insight into retail activity and gives us a strong competitive edge," concluded Elliot.



Enterprise

Creative Field Marketing

Industry

Marketing and communications

Category

Field sales and marketing

Application

SyncSuite sales Merchant

Features

- Natural workflow through a store and tap & click interface
- Real time, wireless access to database
- Centrally-managed administration, storage and analysis of data
- Automatic integration of data on a daily basis
- Two-way communication with CFM headquarters
- Integration of images into reports
- Journey planning

Benefits

- Streamlined field sales results
- Increased in-store productivity
- Enhanced client understanding of market
- A cost-effective solution that is small, light, easy-to-use and photo-capable
- Reduced paperwork and data-entry

Specifications

- Front-end developed using Microsoft ASP Pages
- Back-end developed using Microsoft SQL Server
- Inventory database stored in Scout Sync Server
- Palm Treo 650 smartphone, Palm Tungsten E, E2 and T5.

There are more than 20,000 Palm OS® based applications solutions- each customised to meet the needs of both individuals and businesses. For more information, please log onto www.palm.com/asia