










Palm® Treo™ smartphones lower the cost of doing business and streamline payment processing for Globus tour directors

SUCCESS SUMMARY

Implementation:

-  Palm® Treo™ smartphones connect tour directors to home office¹
-  Custom application for tour information look-up, integrated payment processing¹
-  Magnetic strip readers² for in-field credit card transactions
-  Bluetooth® technology printers² for instant receipts

Result:

-  Faster revenue recognition
-  Freedom from archaic credit card imprinters
-  Virtually eliminated losses due to chargebacks

Case Overview

Globus is an award-winning leader in escorted travel with tour directors located worldwide. In addition to following a pre-planned itinerary, the Globus traveler might spontaneously choose to go whitewater rafting, visit a cathedral, or explore a cave dwelling. Tour directors, some in remote locations, needed an efficient solution for managing these transactions. Globus sought to lighten their tour directors' baggage and lower the cost of credit card transactions.

The Globus implementation included Palm® Treo™ smartphones with custom software that auto-imports transactions into the company's Oracle Financials Database¹. Using magnetic strip readers and e-credit card processing, the Palm solution has increased productivity and efficiency both in the field and back-office.

“Treo smartphones are having a positive impact on our bottom line. We've improved our cash recognition cycle, eliminated payment losses and reduced our overhead costs.”

— EVAN HAROLDS, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, GLOBUS

INDUSTRY RECOGNITION

Computerworld
Mobile & Wireless World

“Best Practices in Mobile & Wireless”

2007 Finalist

Award category:
Deploying Wireless Mobility
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Challenge: Upgrade dated and costly billing process

Globus offers travel experiences in more than 60 countries on six continents. To streamline their innovative optional excursion feature, they required a durable, cost-effective, and flexible solution. They wanted to:

- Free tour directors from clunky mechanical credit card imprinters and books of excursion information.
- Reduce manual data entry at the home office.

- Accelerate credit card transaction processing—a lengthy cycle that could take up to a month with the paper-based system.
- Mitigate the risk of financial loss associated with chargebacks.
- Eliminate the international postage costs related to paper transactions.

Solution: Enable on-site transactions and simplify back-office accounting

Globus sought an easy-to-use, wirelessly connected device. They solicited advice from their solution-development partners, and concluded that Palm’s open platform and friendly interface fit perfectly with their needs. The solution was first tested by river cruise operators in Europe, and there are now over 200 units deployed worldwide. The Globus customized solution includes:

- A paperless database of tour and excursion information organized by trip codes.
- On-site credit card swiping with the Grabba magnetic strip reader².

- Quick credit card approval and processing through PayJunction. If the tour director’s far-flung location does not have connectivity, the smartphone stores all information until it establishes a connection.
- Citizen CMP printers², which tour directors can clip to their khakis to print receipts for the customer on-the-spot.
- Custom software from 3G Touch Solutions that auto-imports transaction details to the company’s financial database¹.

Benefits: Better bottom line

The combination of Palm’s open-platform Treo smartphone with custom software allows tour directors to quickly access excursion information and to electronically send transaction information to the home office¹. Significant benefits of the project include:

- Payment losses have been brought to close to zero due to almost-total elimination of chargebacks and bad debt.
- Integration with the company’s financial database which significantly shortens the transaction process, reducing both manual data entry and the potential for error.
- An improved cash recognition cycle.
- A savings in credit card transaction fees, fewer trips to the post office, and no credit card imprints to lose.

- Freedom from carrying the excursion information book in their backpacks or carry-ons.
- Less time handling transactions and more time engaging with travelers.

Having a Treo smartphone has provided other benefits for the tour directors outside of streamlining on-trip transactions. They can now access the web¹, including their secure site which provides training manuals and software updates. They are also able to take notes and pictures for their trip reports. And, the smartphone speeds up their final tour accounting, so they get reimbursed more quickly for their out-of-pocket expenses. All of this while lowering the company’s administrative costs. With the Treo smartphone, Globus has implemented a true win-win solution.

¹Within wireless coverage area only. Web access requires data services from a mobile service provider.

²Sold separately.



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