

au bon pain®

Case Study Overview

This case study highlights the benefits seen by Au Bon Pain after a pilot program that rolled out Windows Mobile® based devices to field staff. Au Bon Pain has more than two hundred locations currently operating in the United States, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand. To ensure cafes are operating most efficiently and delivering quality service to patrons, field management visits the cafes regularly to monitor the cafes' performance. During these visits, management utilizes reports stored on laptops and printed paperwork but found accessing the most current data cumbersome and inflexible to perform impromptu cafe visits. Therefore they chose to provide field management with Windows Mobile devices to enable them to access current cafe data quickly and easily. With Enterprise Mobile, Au Bon Pain found a partner that helped them understand the best practices to deploying a mobile solution with the Field Management organization.

Case Study Details

An award-winning cafe chain, Au Bon Pain relies on a team of Area Directors that are mostly on the road visiting cafes to ensure that sales numbers align with plans, inventory is in line with customer demand and that customer service expectations are being met. Though Area Directors plan their visits to cafes, they are often required to deal with unexpected issues, leading to impromptu visits and changes of schedule at the last minute.

For Area Directors to accurately assess a cafe's performance, any visit would need to include a review of a particular cafe performance metrics. But Area Directors found they would have to either print all of the required information prior to a cafe visit, or would need to access the information via laptops. Most cafe's did not have the space or additional technology requirements to make using a laptop a real mobility solution. When impromptu visits were required, Area Directors often simply did not have access to the information they needed.

Au Bon Pain had successfully developed line of business applications that Area Directors found very useful for accessing daily reports. However, since they were not able to access the information while away from a traditional desktop or laptop, the application was not being used to its full potential. "Access to reports had been an issue for a while," reports Ed Mockler, Senior Vice President Information Technology Au Bon Pain. "The only way for the information in the reports to be actionable is for our people to get the information in a timely basis. If we could push it out to them, then we'd be providing information in a way that matches their strengths."



Challenge:

- Performance metrics and actual numbers not available to field staff in easily accessible format
- Technology constraints restricted field staff's ability to adequately manage cafes performance and respond to ad hoc issues or perform scheduled and impromptu cafe visits
- Paperwork requirements slowed down off-site access to numbers and reporting capabilities

Solution:

- Implemented pilot program for mobile device rollout to gauge viability of migration to Windows Mobile-based devices throughout cafe management operations
- Managed program from end to end, including device selection, device configuration, and application design
- Developed user training and feedback sessions to support program
- Developed and deployed proprietary application on mobile devices to ensure fast and easy access to key cafe service metrics

Results:

- On-line mobile access to historical and current cafe performance figures and increased agility of field staff
- Staffing and food inventories can be adjusted according to readily available P&L data
- Managers better able to gauge cafe performance and address ad hoc situations with access to readily available performance information

When Enterprise Mobile approached Au Bon Pain with a proposal for migrating to Windows Mobile-based devices, the goal was to create a pilot program that would demonstrate how mobility could help Area Directors be more effective. Knowing that a useful application that employees already valued would help drive deployments, Enterprise Mobile and Au Bon Pain agreed that the daily P&L application would be the perfect place to start.

“So many people were finding they just didn’t have the data they needed when they needed it,” said Mockler, Au Bon Pain. “Enterprise Mobile proposed that we start the mobile device rollout by taking the report our staff most valued, and put it on the hips of our field personnel. The daily P&L application was already near and dear to everyone’s heart, so by putting it on a mobile device we were really just changing the form factor. It was a foundation for success.”

For Au Bon Pain’s area directors, the results were immediate, with users citing more time to manage cafe needs and less time on administrative tasks. Area Directors are able to address cafe issues on the fly, and are no longer hindered by printouts or connectivity issues. “People can get out earlier in the morning and visit more cafes, even those they weren’t planning on visiting,” adds Mockler. “They are focusing less on administrative tasks and more on customer-facing elements. In turn, they are better able to guide cafe managers because they can help them take a step back while showing real numbers to support decisions.”



The success of this rollout was carefully architected by Enterprise Mobile from start to finish. Because the IT department did not have experience developing applications for mobile devices, Enterprise Mobile was able to step in to drive application development. Enterprise Mobile guided the telecom group in selecting the next generation of mobile devices, and configured the devices to ensure they were ready to use out of the box. And Enterprise Mobile created a training series that educated users on how to work with the devices, and then got feedback from the training group on a regular basis to ensure user success.

Au Bon Pain is thrilled with the rollout and reports that users are already looking for the next phase of the deployment. “Enterprise Mobile managed this deployment from end to end in a way that has made mobility work for our organization,” said Mockler. “Enterprise Mobile was able to foresee and manage the critical components of this program flawlessly. They not only provided the technical expertise we required, but removed any fear and uncertainty our employees may have had about going mobile. Our users are already telling us about the next reports they’d like to be able to access. We are really looking forward to the next steps of this deployment.”

About Enterprise Mobile

Enterprise Mobile, Inc. is focused on driving faster, improved and more cost-effective implementation of Windows Mobile®-based messaging, personal information management and line of business application access across enterprise environments. The company’s end-to-end solution facilitates the development and proliferation of best practices in executing a Windows Mobile®-powered mobility strategy.

For more information about Enterprise Mobile’s Best Practices Workshop Series, visit www.enterprisemobile.com or send an email to services@enterprisemobile.com.

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