



Mobile management

CleanLink's Site Manager software is now available as an app for Apple and Android devices, giving cleaning and facilities management companies even more agility when looking after multiple sites. Norman Haines, CleanLink's founder, explains the thinking behind its development, and how it is being used successfully by one of the South East's leading contract cleaning companies.

The 21st century is truly the time of the multi-tasker. Our 24/7 society now decrees that day-to-day living is faster than ever, but we've adapted to these demands and tailored our time to suit. In doing so, technology has advanced at a rapid pace to help us, with consumer products taking the lead and paving the way for businesses to also reap the benefits of smarter, lighter and quicker devices that keep us in touch, and in control, wherever we are.

The evolution of personal computers, from desktops, to laptops, to netbooks, to iPads and tablets has been mirrored by changes in mobile phones. Handsets have become thinner and smaller, with touch screens, cameras and MP3 players virtually now an industry standard. People appreciate the social benefits they provide, allowing them to keep in touch with their nearest and dearest, log on to Facebook and tweet on the move.

Commuters can also keep an eye on their bank accounts and pay bills, making their train or bus journeys more productive. And now businesses are also realising that this technology can help them to provide an even better service to their customers.

Site Manager goes mobile

Recognising that cleaning and facilities management companies could benefit from a mobile app to help them monitor and run their sites, CleanLink launched a version which works on all products running Apple's iOS mobile operating system— iPod, iPhone and iPad — last year. The response was so encouraging that an Android version has now been added, enabling even more companies to take advantage of the efficiencies the software offers.

The 'Site Manager' software package was developed specifically for the cleaning

industry and its functionality has improved over the years, culminating in the Apple/Android apps. It runs on PCs with a link via WiFi, 3G or by docking to your iPhone, iPod, iPad or Android device. It lets companies manage their sites remotely by giving site managers access to a huge amount of information and actions — all tailored to that company's specific requirements — from site details, work sheets and risk assessments through to stores, audits and budgets.

Linked back to CleanLink's own web servers, the application comes loaded with all the information relevant to the client company so managers can pick up their tasks, complete reports on site in real time, and immediately update clients, improving satisfaction rates.

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Managers are able to carry out site audits, scoring everything at the touch of a screen, knowing that the information will be captured by the app and reports will be compiled and saved – and if a client is present while the audit is being undertaken they can sign it off, there and then, on-screen. Staff management is made easier because the software already holds details of everyone that is employed on individual sites and recruitment is also speeded up – simply tap in the person’s name, address and NI number, take a photo of them and their ID, and it’s stored and sent back to head office in a matter of minutes.

As a leading provider of cleaning and support services in London and the South East, City & Essex Ltd has seen a lot of changes in over 40 years of business. The company offers a variety of cleaning services tailored to fit the needs of each of its individual corporate

clients, plus a range of additional services specialising in key areas such as contract cleaning, window cleaning, pest control, waste management, grounds maintenance and housekeeping.

It is also committed to developing its staff, who are given access to training courses under the NVQ, IOSH and BICSc programmes via its own trainers and assessors. In addition, this commitment also extends to making sure that they have the best and most technologically advanced tools to enable them to provide unrivalled customer service to their clients – and that’s why it uses the CleanLink Site Manager software application.

Advantages of the app

Before using CleanLink, City & Essex had another bespoke cleaning package that allowed it to complete wages, regular and one-off invoices, credit control and purchase

ledger, but it was quite basic when it came to ordering stores and producing reports and data to mail merge client information. It also lacked the facility to run quality auditing programmes or retain equipment PAT testing records. This meant that the company had to run several separate programmes, making the integration of data very difficult.

CleanLink’s Site Manager application enabled City & Essex to integrate all of its programmes into a single package. Information – including client data (incorporating multi-sited addresses); staff employed at those sites; customer care/complaint logs; and quality audits – is now stored in just one ‘area’ which can then be fed out to managers on site via iPads or iPhones.

“The sharing and updating of information in one computer programme has been a massive bonus to us,” said Sue Hookway, Company Secretary and Office Manager for City & Essex. “Our area managers now visit sites with all the information they require on their iPads in an easily updatable and readable format. They can also take photos and complete and upload audits whilst on site so the helpdesk personnel in the office know exactly what the issues are, if any.”

Site Manager also allows City & Essex to produce monthly reports for its larger clients, tracking costs, attendance and supplies. The company now works closely with CleanLink’s development team and benefits from being the first to test new applications. This partnership working enables City & Essex to have some input into improvements or upgrades, making the software even more applicable and relevant to contract cleaning companies.

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