

Case study

## Safety-Kleen

Integrated partners,  
integrated systems  
give a “tidy” start to  
mobile automation



At a glance

Industry: Field Service

### In Safety-Kleen’s world, spotless information is a must.

Safety-Kleen is the leading industrial waste management, parts cleaner and oil recycling and re-refining company in North America, serving hundreds of thousands of customers. To do some “cleaning up” of its own data, to improve cash flow from faster, more accurate billing, and to better integrate field operations with new corporate systems, Safety-Kleen set out to automate its business processes with a mobile computing system that would modernize its field service operations and environmental reporting. No reason to waste time. Once its mind was made up, the company determined to develop and deploy the mobile systems to 1,400 users in 160 branches throughout North America in the shortest time possible.

“Once you get working on a project like this there’s no reason not to get it out into the field as quickly as possible,” said Safety-Kleen’s Robert Hawkins, who spearheaded the project. Hawkins brought more than 20 years of experience developing and managing mobile computing systems to his effort to modernize Safety-Kleen’s operations, but noted: “We have so many EPA regulations and record keeping requirements that automating our field force is like no other environment. It complicates things about two times more than any other environment I’ve worked in.”

#### The Challenge

For this project, Hawkins knew a successful deployment depended on the integration and project management skills of his vendors. The timeline was rigid. Satisfying it required incredible flexibility. It also required partners who could deliver without disrupting Safety-Kleen’s day-to-day business. It was time to call in implementation experts.

EDS, which was helping Safety-Kleen complete a major transformation of its business processes and implementation of SAP enterprise resource planning software, was tapped to lead integration between the ERP and mobile systems, and to develop and execute all required user training. The task of providing new mobile computers, reviewing business operations, customizing and configuring application software, surveying facilities and installing the equipment fell to Intermec Technologies and its Technology Services organization. Safety-Kleen was able to concentrate on running its business and did not have to temporarily assign scores of workers to get the new systems implemented.

#### The Solution

“The project was large and certainly required coordination, but managing it wasn’t a challenge for me because everyone at Intermec and EDS was really doing



their job," said Hawkins. "Working with an Intermec Technology Services Project Manager, there was one person for me to go to to get things done. There was no finger pointing between the vendors."

Safety-Kleen chose to deploy Intermec's ArciTech® mobile work order management software on Intermec model 720 mobile computers with an integrated magnetic stripe reader for accepting credit card payment and pen input for customer signature capture.

"Safety-Kleen really needed off-the-shelf software because of the turnaround time on this project. The ability to modify the base software to meet Safety-Kleen's needs was extremely helpful," said the EDS project manager. "It was nice to work with specialists."

"The ArciTech mobile software made the difference," said Hawkins. "It was the most robust and configurable for what we needed. Having one vendor for the hardware and the software was a real plus – we only had to go to one person for a change, and we knew that it would work."

Safety-Kleen, EDS and Intermec Technology Services planned to deploy the system simultaneously at multiple field locations each week during implementation. Applications were modified and tweaked several times before the system was rolled out, which added a few wrinkles to the training and documentation processes. Meeting the plan required the team to deploy at an average of more than 13 service centers and 115 routes each week. Intermec Technology Services representatives typically installed the equipment on

weekends to minimize impact on Safety-Kleen's operations. EDS synchronized its on-site user training with the installations so that systems could be rolled out immediately after they were installed.

"Initially it seemed like an overwhelming task" said the EDS project manager. "Fortunately, Intermec is so customer-focused and flexible. Anything they could do to help, they did."

Safety-Kleen and EDS took advantage of Readicare<sup>SM</sup> deployment services from Intermec's Logistics Control Center to configure the handheld computers, preload the software, and test the equipment, which included computers, printers, chargers and other peripherals, before deployment. The Readicare<sup>SM</sup> team kitted the equipment and training materials and created documentation for each shipment and location. Kits then were shipped to each Safety-Kleen service center, and arrived on site immediately before the Intermec Technology Services team arrived.

#### The Outcome

Daily route stops are optimized and loaded into the handheld each day for Safety-Kleen's customer service representatives (CSRs), who perform sales and service in the field. Important customer history and sales data is included with the route instructions, which helps CSRs plan services with customers and creates additional sales opportunities. Customer service representatives record service performed at the site on the Intermec 720, generate accurate invoices, and accept payment using the integrated card reader. Customers sign on the computer screen to create an electronic signature record. Signature images are

included on receipts and waste records are produced on site using Intermec's PW40 workboard printer, which Intermec Technology Services technicians installed in Safety-Kleen vehicles.

The application satisfied Safety-Kleen's primary goals of reducing its cash cycle and improving invoice accuracy. Route optimization, combined with time savings the computers provide for collecting and processing service data and receipts, enables CSRs to complete more customer visits per day. The impact of automated data collection is much higher in back office operations, because end-of-day reconciliation and further data processing no longer require manual data entry or intensive clerical support. The productivity, efficiency and accuracy gains could enable Safety-Kleen to grow its business and consolidate operations without investing in more workers.

"The system will help revolutionize our business," Safety-Kleen's chairman and CEO was able to state when the application was deployed. "Our people will have accurate information on all aspects of our product lines in real time – while they are meeting with the customer. These computers will provide our employees and customers with the simple and accurate information they need to make timely business decisions."

Despite the whirlwind of activity going on behind the scenes, the implementation was smooth and easy on Safety-Kleen. "We provided EDS and Intermec a schedule, and they executed it," said Hawkins. "They really got engaged with the project, provided excellent people, and got the job done."

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