

Verivo Software Customer Success: Bunzl

Moving Bunzl forward with a mobility solution for today – and tomorrow

Bunzl is a global distribution group that supplies its customers with a wide range of non-food consumables, including packaging and food service supplies; cleaning and safety products; and gloves, gowns, and facemasks for use in healthcare settings. The company has operations in Australia, New Zealand, and Europe, and employs 12,000 people worldwide.

In Australia, Bunzl's food processing division needed a way to modernize its field sales operations. "We were using a paper-based system," says Geoffrey Reid, IT Manager for Bunzl Australia. "Reps took orders throughout the day and spent anywhere from one to three hours entering them into our system at night." This created extra work for the sales team, and meant that orders weren't reaching Bunzl's distribution facilities until evening, giving the company less time to pick, pack, and ship product. "We really needed a way to get that information during the day," Reid says.

STRUGGLING TO STAY CURRENT

In 2009, Bunzl rolled out its first mobile solution, an application designed for the Palm Treo Pro mobile devices carried by each member of its sales team. While this solution allowed sales reps to place orders from their mobile devices, its limitations soon became apparent. It required that a large file – 1 to 2 MB – be downloaded and extracted to an SD card on each device, an unwieldy, time-consuming process that overwhelmed some sales reps. A far larger issue came to light when Bunzl attempted to purchase replacement handsets for those that had become broken or lost, but could no longer find a model that was compatible with its mobile app. "When Palm pulled out of the (Australian) market, we found ourselves in a bind," Reid says, "All of a sudden we had a solution that worked perfectly, but didn't have devices to run it on."

Reid realized that as the pace of mobile technology continued to accelerate, this problem would likely repeat itself each time Bunzl invested in a new custom application. "We had to find a solution that would remain relevant even as new phones entered the market, but we weren't sure where to turn."

THE LOGICAL SOLUTION

Reid contacted LogicalTech, an Australian business consulting and application integration firm, and the company suggested that Bunzl consider a mobile enterprise application platform (MEAP). MEAPs are development frameworks that organizations use to quickly build, deploy, and manage mobile applications using a code free architecture – an important consideration for a company like Bunzl, which has limited mobile expertise and resources. LogicalTech recommended that the company evaluate the platform offered by Verivo, a strategic partner it had recently introduced to the Australian market.

Reid was immediately impressed by a number of Verivo's platform features, chief among them was the development environment that manages every aspect of application design and management. With Verivo's intuitive IDE, everything from data sources and workflows to security protocols and branding elements are designed using a single WYSIWYG interface. Application changes and updates are made in real time and immediately visible to end users the next time they log in – no coding, compilation, or software redistribution required.



- Industry: Food service supplies
- Challenge: Develop a sales-focused mobile application that adapts to new devices and platforms as they enter the market
- Partner: LogicalTech Group, Australia
- Solution: Verivo's mobile platform
- Outcome:
 - Three months from design to deployment of new mobile app
 - 15 percent reduction in sales rep administrative time
 - 10 percent increase in warehouse productivity

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For Bunzl, that meant an end to the cumbersome downloads that characterized its previous mobile solution. “On the Palm, every application upgrade meant downloading and decompressing a massive file, and sending reps a long list of instructions,” Reid says. “But with Verivo’s platform, updates are almost a non event, and that was a big benefit for us.”

Reid says Verivo’s configure once, run anywhere™ technology, which allows applications to be developed once and deployed across all of today’s leading mobile platforms, provides Bunzl with a new level of flexibility. “With our previous solution, we were tied to Palm on a Windows platform. But now we can open up (the application) to BlackBerry and other devices, including iPads.”

Bunzl was able to develop, design, and deploy its mobile application – BFPS Mobile Order Form – in three months, using fewer resources than what was required to manage its previous solution. “With LogicalTech and Verivo, we’ve been able to move development in-house,” says Reid. “And that has resulted in significant cost savings.”

Bunzl is also using the solution to leverage data from other parts of the company. “We want to give the reps real-time stock-on-hand figures and deliver that information to their devices,” Reid says. “Because the LogicalTech solution can

integrate with our ERP system, we can do that.” He says plans are also in the works for an additional application that will allow sales reps to enter data into Bunzl’s new CRM module from their mobile devices.

A PATH FORWARD

Reid says that the LogicalTech solution powered by Verivo has increased the productivity of its sales reps by allowing them to stay focused on customer interactions rather than taking time to manually input orders or manage mobile application updates. Real-time access to sales data has increased efficiencies within Bunzl’s order processing system and provides the company with new insight into its operations and business strategy.

And Reid says that while the Verivo enterprise mobility platform is delivering benefits today, it is also positioning Bunzl for tomorrow. “We can look forward five or six years into the future now, rather than starting (our mobile application development strategy) over again in 12 to 18 months,” he says. “The solution has proven to be great for today, and has even greater implications for our long term direction.”

“We wanted to make sure that the solution we chose would remain relevant even as mobile technology changes.”

