



Ciber Helps Three Companies Go Mobile with SAP



Empower and engage your employees, partners and customers in new and innovative ways

ERP systems were designed with office workers in mind — people sitting at computers who can easily access the information they need for their jobs. But what about remote employees who are accessing information on all types of devices?

Real-world Mobile Strategies for Three Different Business Scenarios:

- A global mining company supports maintenance workers at mines around the world with a mobile plant maintenance solution that includes SAP Work Manager and Motorola rugged mobile computers.
- A leading mineral producer and manufacturer improves inventory accuracy using SAP Inventory Manager and Psion rugged mobile computers to track maintenance assets.
- A large North American wireless communications provider links together more than 2,000 retail outlets with SAP Inventory Manager and Motorola mobile computers.

Not too long ago, employees who couldn't access company computers and enterprise back-end systems — maintenance workers or retail employees, for example — were relegated to a parallel universe where paper reigned supreme.

They would fill out paper forms, receive printed manifests, go through checklists on clipboards, or clock in and out using paper timecards. ERP systems were an afterthought in this world, with information from paper forms being entered later, wasting precious time and sometimes resulting in data-entry errors. But for three Ciber clients, mobile solutions have changed everything.

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Mobility Challenges

Three Ciber clients - a global mining company, a mineral producer and manufacturer and a wireless communications provider had something in common: they all had employees who were disconnected from their companies' back-end systems. For the mining and mineral companies, the reason for the lack of connectivity was a matter of geography, since these workers were located in remote regions where gaining and maintaining access to the corporate network was challenging. At the mining company, being disconnected meant that the company's maintenance workers had to rely on paper to manage and track tasks, while at the mineral producer, employees struggled to maintain optimal inventory levels to support maintenance, repair and operations (MRO) needs at remote mines.

The situation was somewhat different at Ciber's wireless communications client. There, the company's retail workers were not in remote locations, yet they still were disconnected from important ERP systems as they spent hours each month inventorying phones and accessories.

At all three companies, executives realized they could save time, reduce errors and cut costs by connecting their employees to vital back-end systems. To achieve this goal, they each selected Ciber to implement mobile solutions for them.

Global Mining Company Leverages Mobile Maintenance

One of the world's largest gold producers, Ciber's client has operations or assets on four continents. As part of a global implementation of SAP ERP software, they called on Ciber to implement a mobile solution that would support its plant maintenance group. Ciber rolled out a mobile solution for our mining client that included SAP Work Manager and Motorola rugged mobile computers.

The new mobile solution was designed for maintenance workers who may not always be able to connect to the corporate network. They can download critical data before they leave for an assignment, and bring their computers along to capture information about their projects, such as taking pictures of equipment and attaching them to notifications or work orders.

Because Work Manager is integrated with the company's SAP system, maintenance workers can easily create new notifications and work orders and can execute work orders assigned to them. In addition, different security levels (which are based on SAP authority roles) automatically enable different types of functionality for employees depending on their role. For example, supervisors can release work orders, approve notifications and issue permits. By eliminating manual paper-based processes, the mobile solution frees up employees' time, allowing them to be more productive during shifts, and provides consistency for the company's work across the globe.

After the blueprint and realization implementation phases, Ciber assisted in the full integration testing and user acceptance testing of the solution at key sites around the world before rolling out the solution in phases. Now that the plant maintenance group has found success with its mobile capabilities, other departments are beginning to look at ways of enhancing their work processes by implementing mobile solutions.

Large Mineral Producer and Manufacturer Implements Mobile MRO Inventory Management

With operations on four continents, Ciber's mineral producer and manufacturer is one of the world's largest. It is part of an asset-intensive industry, and requires substantial MRO inventories to keep its critical equipment up and running. In addition, the challenges of long lead times due to remote locations and large property sizes make inventory accuracy essential.

So when the company rolled out its new SAP ERP system, it asked Ciber to implement a mobile solution for SAP Inventory Management to support the company's mining operations around the world. The system developed by Ciber included SAP Inventory Manager and Psion rugged mobile computers with integrated barcode scanners.

With the new mobile solution, Ciber's client has improved inventory accuracy while increasing warehouse staff efficiency by eliminating paper-based processes. It has also implemented standard warehouse processes across global sites. By improving inventory accuracy and reducing errors and associated rework, the company has improved maintenance worker service levels and productivity.

Large Wireless Communications Provider Leverages Mobile Tools to Streamline Retail Inventory Processes

Ciber's wireless communications client is a national provider of wireless voice, messaging and data services capable of reaching over 293 million Americans. As part of the company's retailing continuous improvement program, managers and executives take time each year to work in the various disciplines throughout the company. A few years ago, while getting a firsthand view of retail store operations and the challenges of performing physical inventory on all available phone and accessories, an executive identified inventory management as an area where small improvements could create instant value. At the time, it took two to three employees per store four to six hours each month to inventory the entire stock. The company had over 2,000 stores.

Ciber was brought in to analyze requirements and provide a solution to improve the retail inventory process. The solution had to be efficient and use barcode scanning equipment with sub-second response time. It also had to integrate seamlessly with the SAP ERP environment, and it needed to provide full functionality in a variety of retail settings, from full retail stores to small kiosks in malls.

Ciber's solution included hardware from Motorola coupled with SAP Inventory Manager. The goal was to deploy a rapid pilot program, yet to provide the flexibility to grow as the company added retail processes to the mobile application.

The program started small with a handful of pilot stores, but a little over a year later, the rollout to all of the company's stores was completed, with new functionality supporting receiving and stock transfers being added along the way. Now, because their retail employees spend less time on inventory, they can spend more time interacting with customers. At the same time, the company has been able to optimize its inventory, improve inventory tracking at partner locations and has increased its oversight of high-value items.

At the completion of the rollout, our client conducted a survey of retail store managers and received high marks for the process and value delivered by the project. A manager in Pittsburgh said, "The scanners are the best thing you have given to retail," while another in Seattle said, "The scanners have sped up our inventory and ordering process to the point where we have more time to prepare for opening and closing."



Ciber's client's wireless communications director of retail fulfillment agreed with the assessment. "The rollout of the scanners has been one of the best executed deployments I have seen and required close partnership and work between multiple teams," he said.

Ciber Provides Strategic SAP Mobility Solutions

Ciber understands that organizations using SAP are continually looking for new ways to increase productivity and leverage their significant investments in their SAP systems. By automating manual, error-prone data entry operations in key areas such as field sales, manufacturing, warehousing and distribution with real-time mobile data collection applications, organizations can logically extend critical information flows and deepen SAP utilization. With expertise in a full range of complementary hardware, software and infrastructure mobile technology components and core SAP solutions, Ciber is able to offer fully integrated and native SAP solutions to clients as a single-source partner. Among the companies Ciber has partnered with in support of its mobility solutions are SAP, Syclo (now owned by SAP and part of the SAP Mobile Platform), IBM, Motorola Solutions, Psion (now owned by Motorola Solutions), Intermec, Panasonic and Cisco.

Ciber's SAP Mobile Platform Expertise

Ciber also provides complete implementation and business process optimization services for the SAP Platform and the suite of Agency applications. The SAP Mobile Platform provides a comprehensive set of prebuilt, pre-integrated products that mobilize asset maintenance, operator rounds, time/attendance tracking and materials management.

"The rollout of the scanners has been one of the best executed deployments I have seen and required close partnership and work between multiple teams," said Ciber's client's wireless communications director of retail fulfillment.

About Ciber

Ciber is a global IT consulting company with approximately 6,000 employees in North America, Europe and Asia/Pacific. Ciber partners with organizations to develop technology strategies and solutions that deliver tangible business value. Founded in 1974, the company trades on the New York Stock Exchange (CBR). For more information, visit www.Ciber.com.