

Eltel Networks Case Study

How to create sustainable competitive advantages in a complex and challenging world.

This is a true story of how a progressive service company has decided to meet the challenging new demands in its' industry by taking a firm grip on their solution for Mobile Workforce Management.

Eltel Networks is an expanding service company with growing businesses in eight countries in Northern Europe. The company delivers technical installation, maintenance and repair services for the telecommunications and utility companies.

Eltel Networks has decided to create one unified company with long-term competitive advantages in the way they develop, offer and deliver their service offerings.

The Mobile Workforce Management solution has an important central role in this process, to enable and empower change and development.

Creating sustainable competitive advantages.

“Eltel Networks is working in the competitive outsourcing market. So we need to deliver solutions and benefits that are better than our competitors. Otherwise we will be trapped in a “me to” market where the only thing we can compete with is labour price”, Mauri Raitilainen continues.

“We decided to always stay ahead of our competition in meeting the new demands of our various customers. To do so we adopted a 360 view on our customers' current and future demands. In a changing world, we realized that our customer's requirements would constantly change as well. So we needed a solution with a built-in ability to meet changing demands. A system with built-in agility and flexibility.

The common trends of requirements from all our customers in various industries are:

- Integration with customers own work order system
- On line “real time” status reporting
- Evidence of meeting SLAs or not
- Invoicing based on “reality”

The isMobile solution meets all those requirements. And as the solution is flexible to meet changing future demands from our customers, we will have a lasting competitive advantage. We will always have a strong negotiation position when we compete for new assignments.

It a very strong sales pitch to be able to deliver on all customers demands, but also to show that we will fulfil future demands”, says Mauri Raitilainen

You decided to integrate the isMobile Workforce Management solution with a new ERP solution. Why didn't you base your workforce management solution on the ERP system only?

Mobile Workforce Management solutions and ERP systems are designed for meeting completely different demands on change and flexibility, explains Mauri Raitilainen.

ERP Solution

Long-term solution
Standardized solution
Updates but not modifications

Mobile Workforce Solution

Flexible solution
Easy configurable solution
Constant need of meeting new additional service assignments and fine-tuning work routines

Another difference is that it takes years before a new ERP systems is fully installed. We have been able to start our journey towards the future with isMobile before the ERP system has been fully implemented. We will just later “plug in” the ERP system into the already running isMobile solution. So we will get full integration and save time by starting to work immediately in the field with the Mobile Workforce Management solution and later get the benefits of a fully integrated IT solution.

As we are constantly facing new business requirement from our customers, it would be fatal for our service organisation to wait on the implementation of the ERP solution”.

Isn't it expensive and complicated to constantly develop new work process designs for various work processes for new assignments or for new customers?

“No not at all. One of the benefits within the isMobile solution is a unique tool for creating the software design for different assignments and work orders, says Mauri Ratilainen.

We internally just need to graphically draw up the workflow for a new assignment. Define the steps that have to be done by the field worker. What he needs to check, what happens if he needs additional spare parts, how to report unexpected complications etcetera. We simply draw the workflow reality as a picture.

The workflow is then automatically programmed into a suggested work order design. And that design can instantly be sent to the PDA of a pilot field worker to be tested in reality. The whole process is completed in a couple of days.

This has proved to be an even greater advantage than we had expected. It's easy and fun to constantly improve and fine tune already existing work orders designs.

The ease of change and fine-tuning of the programming is in addition a very useful tool for new business acquisition. When we get a request for a new assignment, we can compare with existing programming solutions, make alterations and have a very good understanding for how much time the assignment will take, and how we will price it. It will also be very impressive to within a few days show the client that we have created a work order and report system based on their request”.

How have you introduced this new way of working to the Mobile Workforce?

“In a most interactive way. If you want to change the way people work, you need to involve them and listen to them. And there is a lot of existing know-how based on years of experience, out there, says Mauri Ratilainen.

We have chosen to implement this on a project-by-project base. In Finland, as an example, we introduced the solution in a big but isolated project, to replace all electricity meters in households. It worked out very well. After that, we continued to roll-out the Mobile Workforce solution for additional assignments for various clients.

For each new assignment, and early in the process, we ask selected representatives from the mobile work force to be part of the team developing the solution. We get a good reality check on the solution. And we get a committed “ambassador” for the solution, which later on in the roll-out helps him inform his peers on how to use the solution and improve their working days.

The benefits reported by the Mobile Workforce:

- Minimized paperwork
- Entering a new domain
- Like the device (Symbol MC 70)
- Improved and easy to do reporting.
- Navigation to site

No negative reactions have been recorded from the workforce. It’s the opposite; they question why the management didn’t introduce this way of working much earlier”.

How will you rollout the Mobile Workforce solution in the different countries?

“We want each country to be champions of their roll out. The best way to make a country responsible for the implementation is to give them full ownership. Of course we at head office will support and advise. We give advice and share insights regarding best practice. And isMobile is supporting the roll out country by country by having direct contact with the respective local team, Mauri Ratilainen continues.

It is the same solution in each country. As I mentioned earlier, we are creating one company, and creating sustainable competitive advantages by this unified approach. But due to the agility of the isMobile solution we can adapt and fine-tune the way we use it to specific needs depending on local requirements. And, most important, our clients in different countries will have different demands on our services and different SLA requirements”, finishes Mauri Ratilainen.

Facts:

Eltel Networks is established in 8 countries

Number of employee 9 000

Selection of customers: Elisa, Fingrid, Finnish Rail, Fortum, Kainuun Energia, Telenor, TeliaSonera, Vattenfall etcetera.