



mobile made easy.

Lower Colorado River Authority

**SYCLO SOLUTIONS
IMPROVE QUANTITY
OF COMPLETED
WORK BY 20%.**

QUICK FACTS

Paperless workflow allows data to move seamlessly among transmission groups, substations and field technicians.

Capturing and reporting data in the field allows teams to complete more work per shift.

Increased productivity helps teams perform more planned work.

Accurate reporting ensures regulatory compliance.

The Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) streamlines data flow, improves customer service and ensures regulatory compliance with Syclo’s mobile solutions.

Challenge:

For years, LCRA depended on paper-based work orders to manage all its responsibilities in central Texas: delivering electricity, managing the water supply and environment of the lower Colorado River Basin, developing water and wastewater utilities, providing public recreation areas and supporting community and economic development. However, the manual data entry process caused bottlenecks and inaccuracies. The company wanted to leverage the latest in both enterprise asset maintenance and management applications in order to extend asset life, meet service targets and generate accurate reports to ensure regulatory compliance.

Solution:

Syclo’s mobile solutions enabled LCRA to move, capture and manage complete, accurate data — resulting in improved management, compliance reports and service delivery.

Background

LCRA knew that the paper forms generated by its enterprise asset management (EAM) system were insufficient for managing field meter readings, substation equipment condition monitoring and maintenance work orders. In addition, manual methods of tracking parts inventory usage and reporting for field equipment audits were slowing down operations. To address these concerns and investigate options for streamlining data flow, LCRA’s transmission and substation group joined forces with the generation group at the headquarters in Austin, Texas. This combined team pulled together a strategy for exploring options in time for an important asset management application user conference. At that conference, the LCRA team was introduced to the latest in mobile solutions available for their asset management application.

At that time, LCRA reviewed a number of mobile vendors offering solutions that tied



into its data back-end system and ultimately selected Syclo’s SMART Suite. “What we liked about Syclo’s offering was that others had already deployed the software and served as valuable references,” said Clay Cook, CMMS Manager at LCRA.

Before Mobile Technology

Prior to the installation of Syclo’s SMART Suite, LCRA used paper forms, which were generated and distributed manually, to drive work orders to the field, conduct important meter readings and monitor condition activities across a wide service area covering more than 28,800 square miles in central Texas. Important data that field personnel needed to perform at their best was locked onto forms that needed

to be moved by hand for central dispatch. Those same forms were completed in the field and returned to the office for data entry by support staff.

For LCRA, timely data is crucial to efficient planning and scheduling, as well as the company's internal best-practice goals of completing a majority of its planned or preventive work. "Paper forms held data critical to speeding repairs, optimizing field staff schedules and tracking tools and replacement parts," Cook said. Substation inspection findings and meter readings captured on paper forms presented an information bottleneck that Cook and others at LCRA recognized could be solved with technology available today.

Implementation and Deployment

There were a number of differing needs between the transmission/substation and the generation group. The mobile solution they deployed had to have the versatility and configurability to meet the desired data

management requirements of each. The transmission and substation group sought work order management functionality, along with operator rounds and field asset audit capability. The generation group wanted operator rounds and audit capability as well, but it also wanted to better track inventory of maintenance replacement parts and tools. "Most importantly, we did not want to have disparate applications that would require multiple layers of application support and data integration between our groups," Cook said.

The team at LCRA set an aggressive timeline and a multifaceted project plan to go mobile in a matter of months. The team managers had strict parameters for the project, carefully monitoring costs structures, user acceptability and training and long-term application cost of ownership. The back-end system needed some limited but crucial updates that had to be performed ahead of the mobile rollout. Once those were completed, the mobile project got underway.

Since the initial rollout of Syclo's SMART Work Manager product, LCRA has installed other SMART product line applications, including SMART Inventory Manager and SMART Auditor.

Compliance

LCRA also had to keep an eye on the validation requirements of the state regulators and the U.S. Department of Energy. All energy providers are held to very high asset safety and performance standards by myriad government agencies and public watch-dog groups. To meet these regulations, LCRA is required to keep meticulous records on the equipment performance and maintenance. Tracking all the activities, readings and repairs manually is a labor-intensive, costly and time-consuming venture.

A FLEXIBLE PLATFORM

LCRA needed a mobile solution that offered versatility and configurability to meet the company's data management requirements.



The Symbol 9000 series devices are used by LCRA field technicians to access and record vital data.



LCRA technicians use Motorola's PPT8800 mobile computer from Symbol to view and apply data.

Planned Versus Reactive Work Ratios

Capturing data in the field and reporting it in real time allows organizations to address remote, weather-exposed and aging asset concerns with additional inspections and condition monitoring activities. Like any public energy provider, LCRA strives to meet and exceed service level agreements by isolating problem equipment before it fails.

Completing more work on each shift offered the opportunity to refocus the

company's efforts. When an organization crosses the chasm into more planned work, the reactive work declines because assets are performing as expected, equipment failures are minimized and production downtime reduced.

Looking Forward

With multiple mobile products deployed, LCRA has recently been examining Syclo's SMART Schedule for automating field staff work assignments.

PRODUCTS IMPLEMENTED

SMART Work Manager

Boost productivity and improve on-the-job performance by connecting mobile employees with the critical data they need to better manage work and service requests.

Agentry™ Platform

Design, deploy and manage the entire lifecycle of mobile projects on one software platform. Agentry shortens development times and lowers application maintenance costs while maximizing value and delivering sustained ROI.

LCRA has realized significant benefits since deploying Syclo's mobile technology.

- LCRA has experienced a 20% improvement in the quantity of completed work since implementing Syclo's mobile solutions.
- Using mobile devices in the field, technicians have drastically increased the amount of planned versus reactive work completed.
- With more accurate performance data uploaded into the CMMS application, LCRA has improved its ability to schedule work.
- LCRA now files government-mandated reports with confidence.



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