



SNCF

10,000 SNCF Ticket Inspectors Ride With a WORKABOUT PRO

French state-owned railway company Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer Français (SNCF) is one of Europe's biggest land transportation companies. In 2006, SNCF determined that with the right technology it could significantly improve the productivity and service provided by its ticket inspectors. The European company embarked on a project, called the Accelio computer project, to develop the desired technology to introduce mobile ticketing inspection.

The Challenge

SNCF determined that to truly be successful, the Accelio computer project had to provide a solution that met a variety of needs. The mobile computer had to be small, lightweight, and ergonomically designed so worker well-being is not harmed, and the battery life of the mobile computer had to support a full work shift.

The solution needed to provide a means to deal with the several types of tickets including web-purchased tickets, home-printed tickets, counter-purchased tickets, and contactless tickets such as the "orange" card in Il de France. The solution also needed to support the concession of tickets onboard trains and the issuance of fines. Finally, SNCF wanted to maintain flexibility to expand its solution to meet emerging future needs.

The Solution

A solution was developed around Psion Teklogix' WORKABOUT PRO, Brother's ultra-light portable Bluetooth printer, and a business application by Unilog Management, a LogicaCMG company, to address SNCF's needs. SNCF equipped its ticket inspectors with 11,500 WORKABOUT

PROs configured with Symagery 2D Imagers, RFID readers, GSM/GPRS radio cards, and Bluetooth connections to portable printers.

The WORKABOUT PROs have enabled ticket inspectors to perform a variety of tasks that could not be done in the past. The 2D Imagers can read encrypted barcodes on passenger tickets, the RFID readers can scan seasonal passes bearing RFID tags, the GSM/GPRS radio cards synchronize data with SNCF's information system, and the Bluetooth connections to portable printers enable inspectors to print fines and settlement slips as well as sell tickets on board. Furthermore, the synchronization of the WORKABOUT PRO with the SNCF information system allows ticket inspectors to consult their handheld for professional documentation and information on timetables and routes.

The WORKABOUT PRO is major contributor to the success of the solution. The handheld with printer is lightweight, ergonomically designed, and user-friendly to support the well-being of ticket inspectors, and the dual reader functionality, long battery life, and data capture performance enables greater inspector productivity.

The Benefits

The Accelio computer project produces numerous benefits for SNCF. Improved customer service as a result from ticket inspectors being able to perform duties faster, provide comprehensive real-time information on timetables and routes, and offer on board ticket sales. Information on such items as ticket controls are delivered more quickly and reliably back to main office, which allows for better monitoring and decision-making. The solution helps to prevent instances of fraud because ticket inspection is more effective and efficient and fines can be issued and printed on board. Finally, the productivity and morale of ticket inspectors has improved. With the WORKABOUT PRO, workers are better equipped to perform their jobs and the ergonomics and user-friendliness of the device make life a lot easier.

Psion Teklogix also provided the value-added benefit to SNCF in the form of ensuring that all terminals had a "ready-to-start" configuration. Psion Teklogix assembled all the parts, integrated the various cards and peripherals, installed the software, and performed testing to ensure that SNCF would be able to immediately begin using the devices.



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