

case study



North Ayrshire Council - Identifying £300,000 of savings in 4 months using OPTI-TIME

North Ayrshire Council, which manages over 13,000 homes in Scotland, operates a mobile working system but recognised that it would not get the full benefit of the system without having an integrated scheduling solution in place.

When John McClure of North Ayrshire Council heard about the OPTI-TIME appointment booking and resource scheduling solution in 2007 he decided to go to a presentation hosted by Xmbrace in Edinburgh. The Client Project Manager was impressed by Xmbrace's solution and felt that his organisation could benefit from such a system in the future.



North Ayrshire Council, which manages over 13,000 homes in Scotland, operates a mobile working system but recognised that it would not get the full benefit of the system without having an integrated scheduling solution in place. This system would give the Council a better insight into the location and number of jobs being undertaken.

In 2009, the Council was ready to take this next step and implement a solution

to provide more control over what operatives were doing during the working day.

"We found that the benefits of OPTI-TIME were discussed in all the local authorities in Scotland that we went to visit," said John McClure. "We were not aware of any other organisation that could do what OPTI-TIME could and therefore it was natural for us to choose Xmbrace."

At this time, North Ayrshire Council implemented OPTI-TIME, together with the 1st Touch mobile system and the ROCC housing systems interface.

The council decided to roll out the project in phases as it wanted to give everyone involved the chance to feel comfortable working with the new systems. The electricians were the first



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Billy Borthwick
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of the Council's trades to go live on March 15th 2010. The rest of the trades - plumbers, joiners, fencers, roofers, builders and glazers - all began using the system between March and August 2010.

The OPTI-TIME solution has made work much easier for operatives. "Ask the operatives if they would like to go back to the old way of doing things and a majority of them would not even consider it," said John. "They like doing one job at a time and the freedom it gives them from paperwork."

At the time of the OPTI-TIME implementation, there were twenty-seven operatives in the core trades of joiners, plumbers and electricians. At the time the system went live, a number of operatives were on holiday. However, North Ayrshire Council found that through using OPTI-TIME they coped fine with the reduced number of staff and have since been able to reduce the size of the team.

North Ayrshire Council saw another benefit in the reduction of hired vehicles it required. With fewer operatives doing the same amount of work the Council was able to let go of six rented vehicles, saving a considerable amount of money.

Billy Borthwick, Area Manager at North Ayrshire Council, states "The introduction of the OPTI-TIME scheduling system has been a revelation within NAC Building Services. Within four months all trades in the response business unit were live on the system and savings of around £300,000 were identified, through vehicle and labour efficiencies. The system was well received by operatives and operational performance and customer service has improved.



North Ayrshire Council achieved its target and timescales for the project. "When Nick Jeffreys of Xmbrace was selling the OPTI-TIME solution, he said to expect a 25% efficiency increase," said John McClure. "Within six weeks of implementation we saw a 22% reduction in head count and reduced our rented vehicle fleet by six vans. We have seen these benefits without even trying to make any efficiency savings of our own. As OPTI-TIME has now been rolled out to the entire responsive repairs team, we look forward to seeing the next set of results."

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