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# Streamlined

Quality Elevator has gone paperless, and management, employees and customers couldn't be happier.

by Kaija Wilkinson

It's no secret that elevator people, independents in particular, love paper – handwritten bills, work orders, etc. That is starting to change as business owners invest in paperless technology that saves time and money – not to mention trees. iBusiness goes a step further by planting 50 trees for every system sold. Case in point: Quality Elevator Co., Inc., one of the largest independent elevator service contractors in the Maryland, Virginia and District of Columbia region, earlier this year hired iBusiness Technologies to come up with a digital recordkeeping system after Quality Elevator Vice President Jim Snider attended a presentation by iBusiness founder and CEO

“ *I initially had a concern there would be pushback, but I have been pleasantly surprised by how employees have embraced the technology.* ”

– *Jim Snider, vice president, Quality Elevator Co., Inc.*

Steve Metzman at the National Association of Elevator Contractors (NAEC) NexGen Educational Summit in Port St. Lucie, Florida. iBusiness is headquartered in Philadelphia and partnered nationally with Apple and Verizon to serve clients across the country.

The solution consists of iPads deployed in the field loaded with Quality Elevator forms. The devices have other capabilities, too: they take

dictation, record sound, and take and embed pictures into documents. A network of remote servers hosted on the Internet – also known as a cloud – stores, manages and processes the data, which can be quickly and easily accessed by the home office staff or customers.

As of this summer, Quality Elevator was the first elevator client out of the hundreds iBusiness has. Metzman expects this will soon change however, as independents become more tech savvy and follow the lead of the big OEMs. He plans to give another presentation at NAEC in Boston on September 28-October 1.

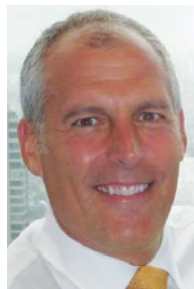
Rather than spring the new iPad/cloud system on employees in one fell swoop, Snider decided to roll it out gradually, starting with five iPads loaded with what iBusiness calls MobiliForms. In Quality Elevator's case, this included a daily report, two different timesheets,



Snider

a parts-requisition form and service/labor recap sheet. The plan includes an onsite implementation coordinator, Jaime Franke.

Quality Elevator's MobiliForms are the same familiar forms the company has always used, just in electronic form. By the summer, 10 Quality Elevator employees were using iPads, and Snider aimed to ramp up to at least 50 by spring 2016. Rather than being taken aback by the changes, employees love



Metzman

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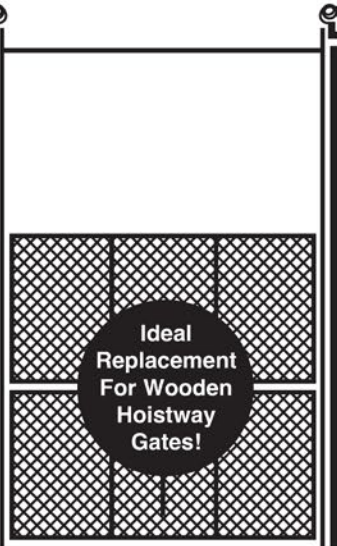
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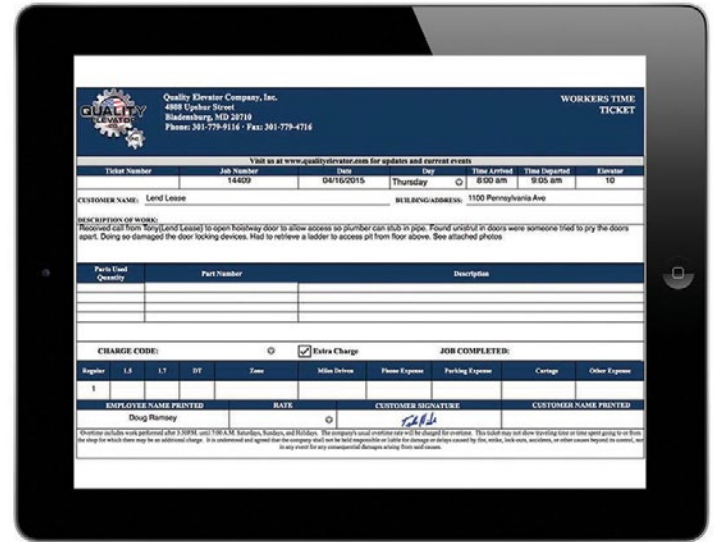
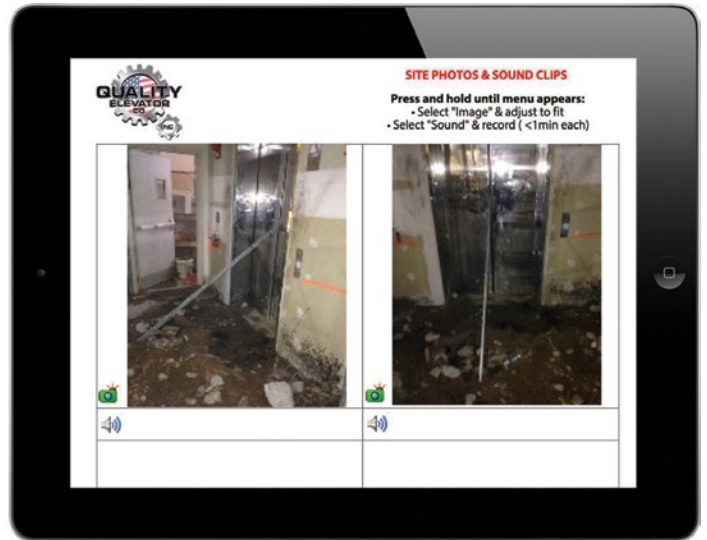
the new system, and those who do not have the iPads want them, Snider says. "I initially had a concern there would be pushback, but I have been pleasantly surprised by how employees have embraced the technology."

Both Metzman and Snider say that is because the devices are easy to use, and the electronic forms look identical to the paper ones previously used. States Metzman:

*"If you think about people in the field, sometimes they are fantastic mechanics but not that great with technology. So, to just give them an iPad with an entirely different type of system typically fails. We've had success because MobiliForms are the same exact documents they are used to seeing on paper."*

The upfront investment in a system varies depending on its size and capabilities, but it can be considerable depending on the number of iPads. That is another reason for hesitation from the elevator industry, Metzman and Snider state. But Snider says he is

*Continued*



Top: Embedding sounds and images into work orders paints a much clearer picture for customers about the work being performed.

Bottom: Quality Elevator's MobiliForms are identical to the forms the company has used for years. There is an option for them to be partially filled out by the home office, saving even more time for technicians in the field.

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already seeing “significant” savings in both time and money and is convinced the investment will eventually pay for itself.

iBusiness has built systems for hundreds of companies. On average, Metzman says, a field employee shaves about 45 min. off his or her day by using MobiliForms. “Forms can be filled out more quickly and don’t have to be driven back and forth to and from the office,” Metzman says. “Companies can invoice their customers the same day, which speeds cashflow. If you think about a company doing up to US\$45 million a year in revenue four or five days faster, that means many thousands of dollars of additional cash flow a month.”


Whether he is at an elevator convention or event within another industry, Metzman talks about how his company, through its partnership with Apple and Verizon, helps other companies streamline operations. “We’ve had a lot of success in many fields by attending trade shows and breaking through all the noise to help people understand their options,” Metzman says. Quality Elevator is “one of many success stories we have in field-based operations,” he says.

What iBusiness did for Quality Elevator required some research. In an impact brief, iBusiness notes Quality Elevator has customers in a wide geographic region. “Elevator service and maintenance requires detailed recordkeeping,” the brief states. “Field technicians must track services completed, hours worked, travel expenses and parts used. Cashflow was impeded by the time

lapse of several days between job completion and invoicing due to paperwork in transit.”

Technicians enter information into the iPad or write into the iPad by finger or stylus. The devices also take dictation and can add sound and photographs, a feature Snider says has been invaluable. “Sometimes, a picture is worth more than anything an employee can write,” Snider observes. “You can see the damage, and the customer is much less likely to complain or have questions.”

Snider said he likes being ahead of the curve. He believes it sets Quality Elevator apart from the competition, so the longer it takes for competitors to catch up the better, he says. He elaborates:

*“We’re getting very good feedback from our clients and our people out in the field. It helps our foremen manage not just time tickets but all of their reports. All of our data is run through the iPads. So, for example, the Trump Hotel [a historic renovation opening in 2016] in Washington, D.C., gets all of its daily reports emailed into its server. There is no paper – it’s all electronic. Plus, it just looks more professional to see a time ticket neatly typed out, as opposed to in each person’s handwriting.”* 



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