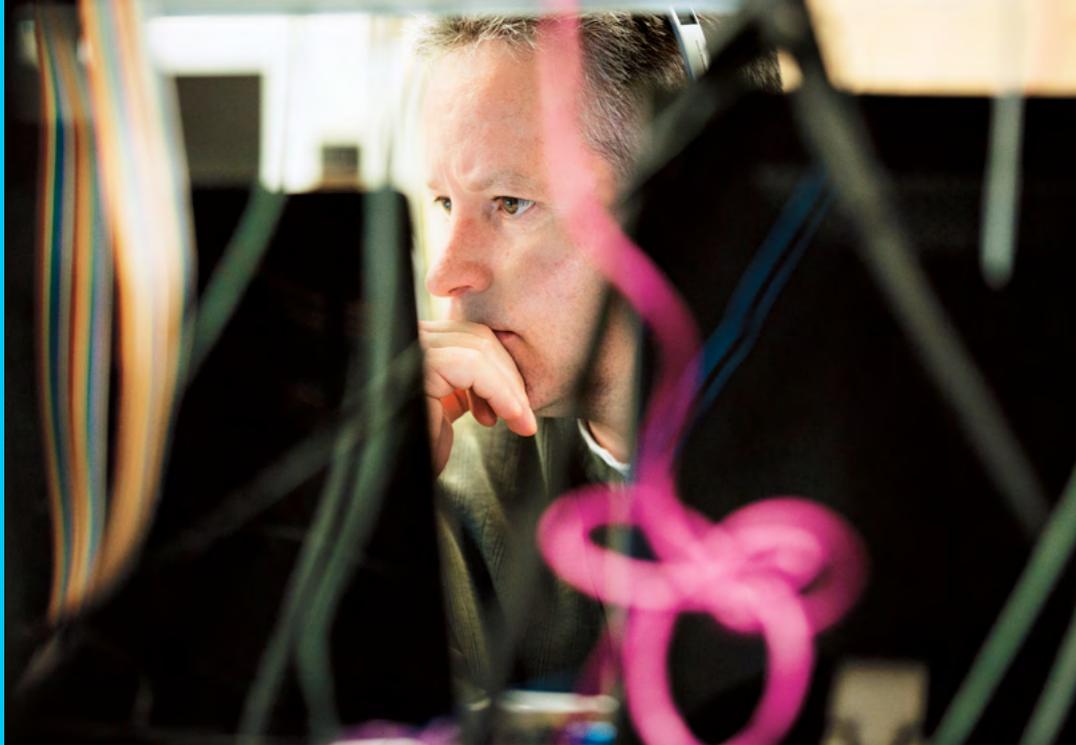Microsoft

Helping deliver great field services with Windows 8
Microsoft UK, 2013

Windows

Introduction

Organisations across the Manufacturing, Utilities and Services (MUS) industries face a more competitive and demanding landscape than ever before, but at the same time it's a landscape full of opportunity. Customers demand excellent service and are interested in new product offerings from suppliers they trust; while high operational efficiency is a necessity to meet shareholder expectations. At the same time, corporations must satisfy regulators and abide by health and safety codes to safeguard employees and customers in closely-scrutinised sectors that include aspects of critical national infrastructure. But the globalising of the macro economy means that there is also a world of possibilities to expand into growing economies and create more effective supply chains and partnering relationships. These organisations need to impress their customers by anticipating needs and market changes, lowering cost bases, creating tariffs that are transparent and attractive, addressing issues quickly, and cross-selling services wherever possible. This paper aims to address the needs of the organisations with large field sales operations. It will focus primarily on the utilities sector, although examples used are relevant to all three types of organisation.

To achieve this laundry list of aims, utilities need to have a single view of customers that allows them to know at a glance all about their histories with the possible capability of pre-empting problems even before they arise. This is especially challenging given the complexity caused by the many mergers and acquisitions that are taking place in the sector, both locally and internationally. At the same time they cannot compromise on security or risk customer data falling into the wrong hands.

Windows

Windows 8: What's in it for Manufacturing, Utility and Service companies?

Support for tablets and other touchscreen devices through an intuitive new user interface

In a sector that has privatised and led to more innovation and competition, companies need to automate wherever possible, react to changes in costs of source materials and double-down on service and creative thinking. IT is one of their best sources of differentiation and for executing on challenges.

Driving change with technology

In an unpredictable world, utilities must have the right management, structures and strategies to make the decisions that keep them one step ahead of rivals. But IT will also play a fundamental role in their ability to take time and people out of processes, gain valuable insights into what's happening now and what will happen in the future, and to delight customers.

IT will be woven into the operations of field service. Asset management, access control tools and remote surveillance will help to reduce risk and improve security. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems will improve the understanding of consumers, enabling them to troubleshoot problems and better target marketing and sales campaigns.

With utility organisations responsible for over half of industrial energy consumption and the environmental agenda so prominent in the minds of consumers and the media, flexible working can help reduce carbon footprints of these large, closely-watched companies.

Windows

Windows 8: What's in it
for Manufacturing, Utility
and Service companies?

Windows 8 Apps for customers &
staff, increasing productivity and
satisfaction

Windows 8 and Field Service

Windows 8 is a boon for organisations with a field service arm, providing a host of capabilities to improve the customer experience, making field service staff more efficient and managers more insightful.

Delight customers and stay in control

Windows 8 consistently makes the customer proposition a beautiful, sleek, design-led experience with fast navigation, touch and built-in search.

That means a compelling experience for self-service, letting customers browse products, find out more information, check availability, order and select the optimal way products are delivered, whether that's to the door, for collection in store or from another destination.

Windows

Windows 8: What's in it
for Manufacturing, Utility
and Service companies?

Deep integration with Windows
Phone 8, Windows Server, Microsoft
Office, and other Microsoft offerings
for ease of use and administration

Fast and intuitive

The Windows 8 user interface offers radically new way for users to interact with computers through the use of Apps. Large tiles make it easy for users to jump to programs and data, especially when using touchscreen devices.

For example, individuals reading meters can enter information into corporate systems immediately. Maintenance staff can see customer records at a glance and interrogate knowledge bases to diagnose and troubleshoot problems. Alternatively, sales executives can demonstrate new services or offers to consumers, such as smart meters that help them understand where their money is being spent.

At plants, staff can use their tablet devices to check that power-generating equipment is in working order. Executives can get an instant visual insight into performance through an alert of key performance indicators, knowing when targets are being surpassed or not being met through Apps displaying live tile information that displays dynamically changing data.

Making the customer feel special

The interface of Windows 8 offers a compelling way for customers to understand what is going on, especially on a tablet device where it is easy to share views of how a solar power installation would work or how it could be financed under terms of the Government's Green Deal initiative.

Windows

Windows 8: What's in it for Manufacturing, Utility and Service companies?

Tight integration with communications and collaboration tools like Lync, Skype, Yammer, Sharepoint and Skydrive Pro

Customers can also sign off problem troubleshooting visits with a signature or swipe. They may even be informed in advance of the progress of the visiting technician so they don't have to waste half a day waiting for him to arrive.

Helping service staff know what's going on and how to act smarter
With hardware support for GPS, maps, geo-location and 4G connections, Windows 8 devices, ably assisted by Windows Phone 8, help field service staff to discover where they are, best routes to take on domestic calls, and what the likely root causes of problems are, even before they arrive at the site.

Once there, staff can use their devices as knowledge bases to identify problems and resolve them. They may use video communications to sort out a particularly knotty problem and be able to use augmented reality to overlay auxiliary information via the smartphone's camera view.

Also, with the Windows To Go feature, containing the ability to plug in a full Windows 8 environment on a usb stick, staff can take a secure environment with them wherever they go, so that any computer acts as the staff member's own system and there's no need for computers to be carried on every visit.

Windows

Windows 8: What's in it
for Manufacturing, Utility
and Service companies?

Windows To Go so USB drives can
transport users' entire systems from
device to device

Helping managers really manage

Managers can be more effective, using business performance analysis tools to identify new trends and then see them in graphical form. A business performance director might assess fastest-growing territories, for example where new homes or workplaces are being built, and invest more in selling to those areas.

At the same time they can track staff movements, analyse these and hence improve logistics planning to be more effective and faster-moving.

Sweat assets and get the most out of your investment

Windows 8 integrates with existing Microsoft platforms, with many customers choosing to run both Windows 7 and 8. Windows 7 Apps are compatible within a Windows 8 environment, which ensures companies can reuse existing investments, as well as developer, admin and end-user skills.

Windows

Windows 8: What's in it
for Manufacturing, Utility
and Service companies?

Highest ever levels of security.

Training while on the move
to increase skills

By utilising a device running Windows 8, the device can double up as multiple
training manuals, helping staff learn new skills on a self-service, learn-
as-you-go basis or via more formal training programmes, even allowing
less experienced staff to get on-the-job training from more experienced
engineers located at another job, through the power of a Lync or Skype call.

Windows

A Day in the Life of a Field Engineer

9am: Graham, a gas engineer in Glasgow checks his schedule on his phone and knows he has to investigate a possible residential leak. The screen provides maps, directions to the house and turn-by-turn satellite navigation voice guidance.

9.30am: On arriving at the address, Graham uses an App to call up a 360 degree view of the customer record, listing previous call-outs and maps of other recent suspected leaks in the area, all overlaid on a digital map, together with whether those turned out to be actual leaks or false alarms.

10am: Graham checks on the leak and confirms there is a problem. He logs this, fixes the local problem, documents the work done, prints off a record for the customer and logs an alert to his manager that there has been a spate of similar problems in the local area that might warrant further investigation. He also shows the customer details of a website that provides all live information about the state of utilities in the area, and uses the Windows 8 Share feature to email the site details to the customer. Returning to his vehicle, Graham receives details of his next visit, together with route planning because there is traffic congestion on the main road.

Windows

A day in the life of a field engineer on Windows 8

12noon: Back at HQ, the utility company is holding an important board meeting to discuss strategic planning. Two main proposals have been tabled: to expand from gas into electricity supply or to expand into telecoms and internet service provision. By using data sets from industry analysts and financial reports over the past five years, mapped onto a compelling set of graphics and 'what if?' scenarios, senior executive David, backing the gas proposal, makes a convincing case that electricity supply will be a more profitable sector. However, by showing maps documenting movement of staff and demographic details of regions where the company is strong together with polls of customers, CFO Steven, supporting the telco/internet move, is able to show that there would be strong synergies in such a move. Also, having analysed the HR system that lists past experience of management and staff, it's clear that the company has strong domain knowledge in the sector.

2pm: In another part of HQ, Mark and his team of business analysts have observed that gas and electricity consumption has risen sharply in the past few months. Mapping this trend against the weather it becomes obvious that a big part of this rise has been caused by the cold snap and therefore consumption is higher in the areas of the country most affected. However, based on historical data they also spot an anomaly: consumption is up beyond what would normally be expected and even in areas where the weather has been comparatively mild. By examining news over the period being analysed, there is one clue: a hugely popular TV cookery show has sent viewers to their kitchens to try out new recipes immediately after the programme has aired.

3pm: Mark uses his Windows 8 Lync app to call Claire in marketing, pointing out this new insight. Claire makes a note and immediately sets up a group discussion on an internal collaborative system that lets users air ideas for discussion. The best idea that emerges: give away a set of cookery utensils branded with the name of the programme for new customers or those who sign up for a promotion to make better use of energy.

4pm The board meeting over, CEO Roger, has food for thought. He wants to see even more details of the setup cost of moving into the telco/internet space and wants to create a SWAT team to address the issue, including the company CIO Gary, who suggests that by using cloud services, a test-bed can cheaply and quickly be set up.

■■ Windows

Tube Lines

Tube Lines: Securing access to data with Windows 8

Windows 8 with Windows Server 2012 will offer a highly mobile workforce a more secure, easier to manage infrastructure, with less time to access critical data

The Windows 8 Emergency Response Unit touch application gives engineers access to the latest inventory and maintenance information in real time to do their jobs

Windows 8 offers multiple form factors for engineers to access secure information with BitLocker and AppLocker

Standardising on Windows 8 devices will reduce total cost of ownership versus iPads

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Conclusion

Organisations across the Manufacturing, Utilities and Services (MUS) industries face a more competitive and demanding landscape than ever before, but at the same time it's a landscape full of opportunity. IT is one of their best sources of differentiation and for executing on challenges.
Windows 8, helps such organisations, and specifically the field engineer, respond positively to the challenges.

Not only does Windows 8 help address the technology needs and challenges of industry, where organisations have made recent investments in a modern Windows desktop infrastructure, it will fit alongside and compliment that investment.

www.microsoft.com/uk/COIT

■■ **Windows**