



# THREE INDUSTRY-CHANGING TRENDS

By Robert Sombach

Three emerging business software trends are impacting the Weights and Measures service industry on a daily basis. Companies that adopt these trends early can get ahead of the competition....and stay ahead!

## WHEN YOU'RE ON THE MOVE!

Mobile Computing remains one of the most important trends today, and can result in a dramatic ROI improvement. According to a field service report by the Aberdeen Group, a top-ranked U.S. research firm, 58 percent of incoming calls requesting service result in a service rep being dispatched. In the majority

of cases, the service rep is the only rep the customers sees after the initial sale. Therefore, the rep's ability to successfully deliver the service in a timely manner goes a long way to winning the customer's approval and loyalty.

Mobile computing can help cement a positive "after sale" impression of your customer support service. Using a mobile device, the service rep can have access to the most recent data that is relevant to the service call or calibration visit....right on the spot. This means huge gains in speed and accuracy of calls for the customer and huge gains in productivity and profitability for the service department.

But, mobile applications need to be engineered correctly. Consider the advantages if each new certificate is automatically pre-populated with the last visit's information. The on-site tech not only has access to his own notes when recoding the new data, but also has the benefit of the last tech's observations as well. For example, if last tech on-site made a note of some damaged at the back of the scale, this information is already on the form and won't be overlooked by the new technician. This also makes it easier to approach customers to recommend the fix when it is consistently noted in their

documentation on each and every visit.

In *Miracle Service* certificate & service management software, this automatic pre-populating of the last visit's information is an option that is chosen by many scale industry customers.

## ON-LINE CERTIFICATES

Just about every day my company speaks with another scale company that has been asked by their customers for on-line access to their completed calibration certificates. This is no surprise. According to Convergys, the number of consumers preferring automated self-service has doubled to 55 percent in the last five years.

Paper forms can take a toll on business efficiency, accuracy, and can negatively impact customer service. **Mobile Forms** are the new go-to for modern scale companies, streamlining their service department, while improving customer satisfaction as well as the company's bottom line. Gone are the days of photocopying, scanning, emailing or faxing certificate copies to customers! Today, employees do not need to drop everything to service a client.

Implementing a software program that gives the option for a customer self-ser-

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vice portal will help companies to make their completed certificates available to their customers on-line. At the same time, software programs that also let customers open and track the progress of service tickets as well as view order statuses from that same portal will provide additional efficiency benefits.

### TURNING INFORMATION INTO KNOWLEDGE!

Every day companies are collecting and storing valuable data in their daily operations, such as information about customer equipment and service sales, purchasing of parts and supplies, equipment repairs and completed work orders, next calibration dates and much more. In fact, most companies are drowning in data! The challenge is dealing with this volume of information in a meaningful way.

In response, a growing number of enterprises are turning to **Business Intelligence (BI)** to transform data into knowledge.

In the past, managers have relied on their intuition and experience to make critical decisions. This is changing, as the need is increasing for managers to respond faster with more accurate information to ongoing internal and external events. This new environment is moving us from the "information economy" to "the intelligent economy", where it is not only access to information, but the ability to analyze and act upon it, that creates a competitive advantage.

Companies need to consider several things when looking at BI.

- Ensuring the right information is being collected
- Making sure the information is being stored in a central system so it can be accessed and included in the business analysis process.
- Ensuring the proper tools and system are in place to efficiently utilize and analyze the information.

BI is designed to help managers make sense of business data. It can analyze key performance indicators and deliver more knowledge about customers and operations. It can show managers exactly where the problems are in their operations. It can also help take advantage of the data to improve customer satisfaction and identify important emerging trends, among other things.

### WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN?

Adopting these trends will make service technicians more effective, improve service department operations, produce reports managers need to be more efficient and most importantly, increase customer satisfaction. The end result will be a higher customer retention rate and ultimately higher profitability.

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