



## **How Virtual Manager Streamlines Service Delivery A Queensland Council Case Study**

Local authorities are tasked with the responsibility to provide services in a timely, efficient, and cost effective way. Sadly, these goals are sometimes hampered by the inability to detect and deal with problems as soon as they occur. This is a classic business challenge and one of the key areas Virtual Manager excels at addressing through the targeted application of cutting edge mobile workforce solutions. The purpose of this case study is to showcase how Virtual Manager assisted a large Queensland local authority to revolutionize the way in which they deal with an issue that is a perennial headache for many local authorities – maintaining facilities in a clean and presentable state with a remote workforce.

### **The Problem:**

Nothing guarantees a poor guest experience more than a dirty public facility (restrooms, recreational areas, etc.). Dirty facilities, unstocked dispensers, broken fixtures, and offensive graffiti top the list of complaints people report to local authorities. Ensuring clean, safe, and sanitary facilities is a high priority for all local authorities, but can be challenging with numerous facilities to monitor. In addition, the ability to manage a team dispersed across an area of 600 Square Kilometers on a daily basis was proving to be a major challenge for the client.

One obvious way to address the problem of staying up to date with cleaning and maintenance would be to make use of location sensitive technology, but rolling out the necessary infrastructure to enable problems to be reported would have been prohibitively expensive for the local authority.

### **The Solution – Virtual Manager’s Mobile Technology Workforce App:**

Virtual Manager approached the challenges faced by this particular local authority by taking advantage of mobile technology and, rather than designing an expensive hardware system, designed a dynamic mobile app.

The mobile cleaning application developed for the local authority makes full use of mobile technology capabilities, including constant connectivity and geo-location. Once cleaners install the application on their smartphones, it becomes their ‘one stop shop’ for managing their workday, completing tasks, and reporting issues that require attention into local authority databases.

When a cleaner logs in at the beginning of his/her workday, a list of daily activities appears on the screen. The list of activities and instructions are ‘site specific’ as the app uses geo-location to determine what site the worker is at. Once activities are completed, real-time completion and maintenance reporting can be done through the app. The cleaner’s time is then recorded against daily performance expectations and alerts regarding maintenance issues are sent to management.

The system gives cleaners instant access to information and provides a seamless and streamlined way to report their activities. The system is of even greater benefit as far as efficient management is concerned. As real-time information is received from workers, it is



integrated into an up-to-the-minute dashboard display that allows managers to have a real time perspective of how the workday is progressing. Issues that require urgent attention can also be identified at a glance through the use of ‘traffic light colors’. The system also assists in evaluating the performance of the cleaning team and of individual cleaners to help with assessments and remote training.

### **The Results:**

Currently, about 100 staff members are using the system on a daily basis and have reported the following ongoing benefits:

- **Greater Responsiveness:** The fact that reporting is happening in real-time means problems and issues can be identified almost instantly and dealt with promptly. This reduces the negativity that often arises when the public feels that the local authority is not servicing the community. It also provides transparency to the public demanding to know when certain tasks will be carried out.
- **Improved Efficiency:** Cleaners know exactly what they are supposed to do at each site and can instantly report on their progress. They are also able to report possible maintenance/graffiti issues at the push of a button instead of having to make a call or fill in a form. This means that more of their time can be spent on their core tasks. There has also been hard cost savings across the state due to the ability to record daily task completion performance against benchmarks set by the organization. Annually, the local authority is saving \$150,000 in staff wages as team performance has become more efficient with a reduction in staff numbers. Also, due to the insights delivered by the system, the required number of supervisors to audit venues has reduced from six to three FTEs resulting in an annual savings of \$280,000. Virtual Manager’s overall approach is to reduce annual maintenance expenditures by about 17 percent on a state basis.
- **Streamlined Reporting:** Workers and managers report that Virtual Manager’s cleaning app significantly simplifies and expedites their reporting structure. This has led to the following benefits being reported: 1) Improved compliance maintenance 2) simplified record keeping and 3) accurate performance monitoring.
- **Hard Cost Savings:** Further savings have been obtained via the reduction in insurance premiums due to the ability of the system to monitor venues being cleaned to a schedule and the evidence collated within the product. Training costs have been reduced by 30 percent as previous face-to-face training is now conducted as a department only twice a year. The local authority’s overall savings utilizing the remote eLearning training and assessment module has been approximately \$75,000 annually.

As a testament to Virtual Manager’s success in this particular application, Ryan Jones, Facilities Director of the Cleaning & Facilities team commented, “Virtual Manager has given us an incredible insight into our field based activities, we can see daily jobs being completed real time and can provide up to the minute feedback to the public. Our team feel more empowered and it is reducing our daily workload significantly. In addition, Virtual Manager had an incredible ROI in less than a month.”