



Case Study: Lower Valley Water District



Intelligent Mobility

Through the integration of Able Software’s billing package and Compsee’s Mobile Application Terminal (MAT) handheld device, Lower Valley Water District is finally able to experience a complete utility solution that is efficient, reliable, scalable, and user friendly.

Lower Valley Water District (LVWD) is located in the southeastern portion of El Paso County, Texas. Created as a municipal utility district in 1986, it currently serves around 34,000 customers in communities of San Elizario, Socorro, Clint, and Horizon city. The population of these communities is estimated to double within the next decade.

The Situation

With the rapid growth in the number of connections Lower Valley Water District serves, collecting meter reading has become a large scale project that takes a significant amount of man power and time. As the size of the meter reading project grows bigger, it becomes increasingly important to minimize errors, and improve the entire data collection process. Although Lower Valley Water District has for years employed an automated meter reading handheld

solution, the capability it provided was simply limited, inflexible, and less than reliable. Some specific problems they experienced are:

- Short battery life, the handheld weren’t able to last on a long route.
- Slow transferring speed between the handheld and the computer.
- Slow search speed when the handheld is handling a large route.
- Weak display that are hard to see under direct sunlight or not enough light.
- Multi-step data import/export process in relation to the billing software.
- Little customization/configuration options available to improve or alter the software loaded on the handheld. Proprietary system prevents any 3rd party improvements as well.
- Proprietary memory hardware means higher cost.

case study profile

Company

Lower Valley Water District

Vendor/Technology

Able Software Company and Compsee

Challenges

- Device reliability
- Data transfer speed
- Ease of use
- Screen visibility
- Business process efficiency
- Scalability, customizability, flexibility

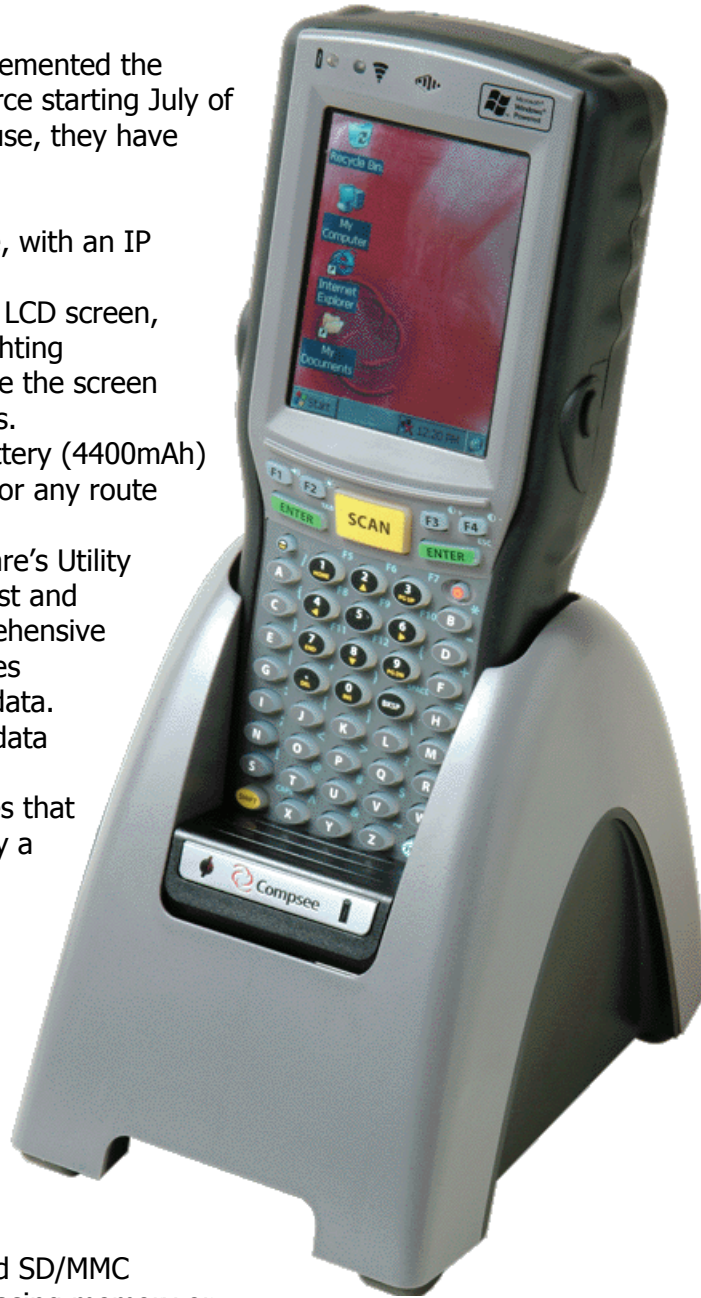
Solution

What good is a handheld solution if it lacks battery power, reliability, scalability, speed, ease-of-use, and customizability. The Compsee Mobile Application Terminal (MAT) provided the next generation handheld device Lower Valley Water District has been searching for and satisfied the above criteria. Employing the Windows CE.NET framework, the device is highly reliable and customizable. Through a seamless integration with Able Software’s Utility Star billing system, the entire business flow for data collection is highly efficient. Anticipating for future needs, the device is equipped with a compact flash and SD/MM card expansion slot, along with radio, WI-FI, and Bluetooth connections.

Benefits

Lower Valley Water District implemented the Compsee MAT into their workforce starting July of 2005. Within a few months of use, they have discovered benefits such as:

- A rugged and reliable device, with an IP rating of 64.
- Featuring a large and bright LCD screen, visibility is good under all lighting conditions. Being able to see the screen clearly means reduced errors.
- High capacity lithium ion battery (4400mAh) means long operation time for any route length.
- Integration with Able Software's Utility Star billing system means fast and easy data transfers. Comprehensive end of transfer report enables easy review of all collected data.
- Powerful CPU provides fast data searches and entry.
- Customizable reporting codes that enables Utility Star to display a summary of message for all meters during data upload.
- Special instructions can be downloaded from the billing system and displayed on the handheld.
- Visual Basic based software means fast and reliable development speed for any software customization.
- High/Low reading alerts.
- Accessible compact flash and SD/MMC expansion slots makes increasing memory or adding accessories a snap. Accessories that can be added through the compact flash expansion slot includes digital camera, GPS, long range laser scanner and etc.



The Compsee MAT handheld device is a next generation handheld packed with the most cutting edge technology. As shown in the picture to the left, the device sports a large and bright color LCD screen. Buttons are arranged so that it can be easily accessible with one hand, and the device supports a multitude of networking options including Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, and CISCO Radio connections.

The MAT Docking Station shown is capable of charging both the handheld and a spare battery at the same time. Also, the base of the docking station supports connection via USB, Ethernet CAT5 cable, and serial cables.

For more information, please
E-mail: info@able-soft.com
Call: (949) 274-8321
Fax: (949) 328-6359

Our mailing address is
30 Corporate Park, Suite 104
Irvine, CA 92606