Overview:

Mindfire Solutions has been the preferred development partner of this client for many years now. At the time when we started the engagement, the client had operational versions of two desktop applications. One of the applications was an integrated Point-of-Sale system with features to unify every aspect of the day-to-day operations of retail setups. The other one was an integrated management system which could ease the process of measuring performance and improve the productivity of field service operations.

The team at Mindfire has since then been involved in constantly performing enhancement and maintenance work for both the applications. Based on need, our client deploys customized versions of the desktop applications for its customers.

Subsequently, there was a need to develop a set of web applications, which are also mobile-enabled, to be used by the retail personnel doing field work. Essentially, a host of functions are performed by them real time and access to data becomes invaluable at the time of executing them. Realizing the importance and the need for the same, the applications were developed by Mindfire to get the personnel to stay connected with the data - for access as well as updations. These applications also connect to the desktop applications described above.

Client details:

Name: Confidential | **Type**: Retail Solution provider | **Location**: USA

Technologies:

FilerMaker

Desktop Applications

App1: Integrated POS application

Application Type: Desktop

Summary: This application is aptly designed to meet the needs of retail setups and B2B businesses. Comprehensive and integrated, the application has powerful features to enable its users to achieve very high levels of efficiency and profitability. This system manages many areas of the business which are laid out in a logical way. The primary modules include:

- Inventory
- Purchasing
- Receiving
- Quotes & Sales Orders
- Customer Management
- Product Management
- Integration with Service
- Deliveries
- Warranty Service Processing
- Mobile Dashboard
- General Ledger Integration
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Commission/Spiffs
- Buying Group Integration
- Returns / Reverse Logistics
- Customer Surveys
- Marketing
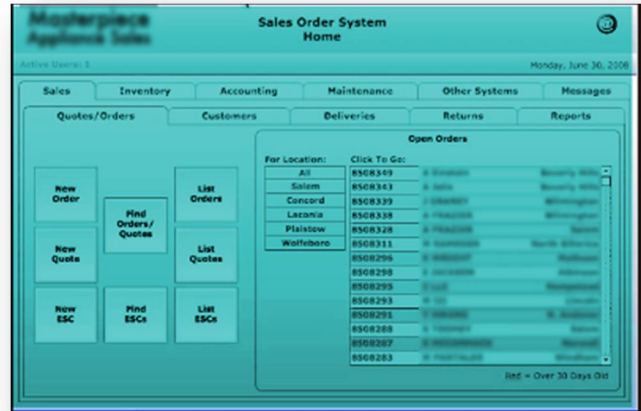
The features available under each of the major areas allow users to manage the related activities efficiently and with convenience. There is also a reporting system made available.

Confidential

App 2: Integrated and customizable system to offer field service solutions

Application Type: Desktop

Summary: The application is very user friendly and intuitive and can function as a stand-alone system as well as seamlessly integrate with App1. The easy-to-use interface allows every other user in the value-chain to effortlessly use the application to their advantage and collectively draw the benefits of the resulting synergy. There are various sections available to handle different functions. The major ones are:
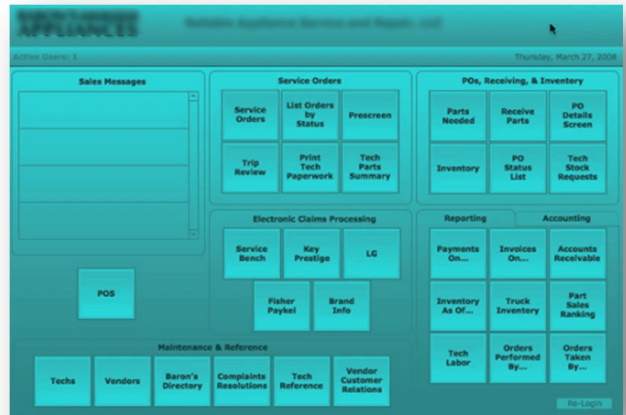
- Multi-tech Scheduling
- GPS Mapping
- Warranty Service Processing
- Purchasing
- Self-service Web Scheduling
- On-site Credit Card Payment
- On-site re-visit scheduling
- Integration with Sales
- Mobile Business Intelligence
- General Ledger Integration
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Digital Call Wall
- Key Performance Indicators Report
- Integration with Sales
- Customer Surveys

One of the defining features of this application is the auto-status update. The status update of a service order never requires any form of user intervention; it is done by the system which triggers the changes based on specific conditions in the service order. This feature has proven to be highly effective and reduces the service ticket cycle time considerably.

Mobile Applications

These are utility web applications which are mobile enabled and used by retail personnel in need to access, update and modify data while executing various tasks. It enables them to stay connected wherever they are.

App 3:

App Functionality: Scanning

Summary: This app instantly turns a handheld device into a lookup and information gathering source. It is as much useful in warehouse as it is on a sales floor. On typing the bar code of an item, information such as how many products are available, pictures, category information, floor price, etc. can be easily found out. Other benefits include information about inventory location wise and its transfer between locations.
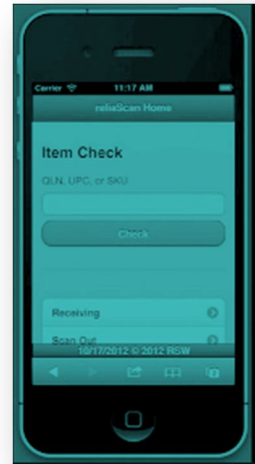
App 4:

App Functionality: Goods Delivery

Summary: This app is used by drivers as they go about their work of delivering goods. Using the app they can see all the stops on the route including the pieces on each one and any balances which need to be collected. There is also provision to see the details of the customers, including their contact numbers and collect the signatures for the deliveries. The office can get instant access to all these details, since all the activities are live, and take prints out of the slips. There was an old version of this application which was enhanced and web enabled by the team at Mindfire.
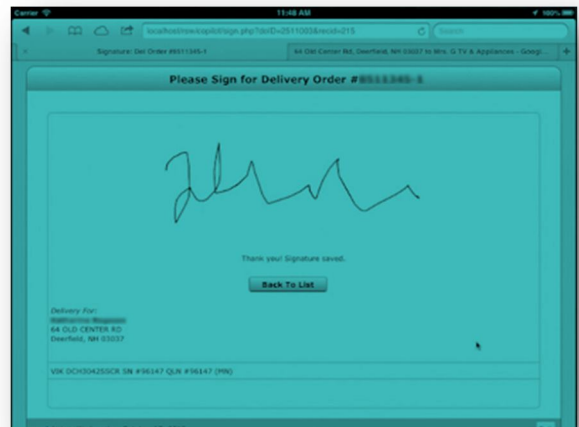
App 5:

App Functionality: Effective servicing

Summary: This app is used by technicians and service managers. It enables them to do everything they need to do on the move and in the customers' premises without having to call the office or getting stuck for paper work. Using this app they can see their schedule for the entire month at the high level. On a daily basis they can see the order of calls to be made with provision to capture all the relevant details pertaining to each, including the signature of the customer to acknowledge the transaction. They can also find details of vendors and connect to them if need be. Since everything is live, changes made in the office also get reflected for them to refer to and therefore act in consequence. There was an old version of this application which was enhanced and web enabled by the team at Mindfire.

App 6:

App Functionality: Web app for Sales personnel

Summary: Designed to equip the sales people to serve the customers no matter where both the parties are at any point in time. This app offers all the functions available in App 1 on any tablet/smartphone with a web browser. Some of the functions which can be performed include writing and editing sales orders, scheduling deliveries, getting customer info and editing them, looking up products, checking stock, taking payments, and running the daily cash-out report at the end of the day. Sending emails and calling is also possible. Bluetooth, usb and other devices are supported for swiping credit cards to facilitate payment.

App 7:

App Functionality: Dashboard

Summary: This app makes it possible to get access to the key performance indicators of a business at any instant and from anywhere; enabling the user to get an understanding about the health of the business. The indicators can be for the whole business, combinations of stores / profit centers or salespeople. Relevant information of service and delivery capacities can also be accessed with the click of a button.

Way Forward

The client has been highly appreciative of the effort and commitment shown by the team at Mindfire over the years. A new project which is underway is a multi-tenant mobile web application in PHP and MySQL and has all the features of App1 and App2.